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The Normative Use of Scripture by Typical Theologians of Protestant Orthodoxy in Great Britain and America.

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE DIVINITY SCHOOL IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

BY

CHARLES MANFORD SHARPE

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

This inquiry will seek to ascertain what part the Scriptures have actually played in determining the form and content of the several theological systems now current among the orthodox Protestant communions of Great Britain and America. Although it will, of course, be impossible to exhibit in detail the theological usage of Scripture in the case of any large number of theologians, we shall try to make our selections truly representative and of sufficient breadth to guarantee an adequate induction.[1]

The claim is confidently made that the theology of the various orthodox writers is faithfully constructed with reference to the formal principle of Protestantism, namely, the sole authority of Scripture. It purports to be simply the objective presentation of the system of religious truth contained in the Bible and constituting the Christian revelation. We desire to know whether this claim is true to fact. If so, we wish to see how it is so. If not, we wish to see why not.

Since the inquiry is purely historical and objective, it will be well in the outset to sketch briefly the development which has set for us our problem. In the beginning of Christian thought there was, of course, no distinctively Christian literature to serve as an authoritative doctrinal standard. The early disciples used the Old Testa-

[1] The following names are included for the reasons specified: Doctor Charles Hodge was the most influential American theologian of the last half century representing strict Calvinistic confessionalism. Professor Warfield with greater awareness of critical and scientific developments still maintains the same general positions. In his writings we may note how the theory of Scripture held by this strict school re-acts toward the changed temperature of biblical studies. Professors Orr and Denney represent a Presbyterian theology taking still further account of modern tendencies. Orr represents predominantly a philosophical interest, while Denney's approach is rather from the side of religious experience. President A. H. Strong is of importance on account of his standing among Baptist theologians, and because of his attempts to combine intense devotion to the orthodox tradition with open-minded hospitality to biblical, scientific and philosophical studies of the present day. The latter reason applies also to the inclusion in our investigation of Professors C. M. Mead and Olin Curtis.

ment much as the Jewish teachers of the time used it. They regarded it as of full divine authority, not only for Jews, but for Christians as well; and they sought to support their belief in Jesus as Messiah by appeals to Old Testament Psalm and Prophecy. Their difference from their Jewish opponents related not to the authority of the Old Testament, but to its interpretation. Even here the difference was not so much one of method as of viewpoint. The early Christians having accepted Jesus as Messiah, used this belief as a key to the meaning of Scripture, while the Scribes interpreted in the light of the oral tradition, and of their particular brand of Messianism. In neither case was there any interest in questions relating to the origin, character, and purpose of the several parts or books of Scripture. No questions were raised, or at least no considerable ones, regarding the Canon. The whole body of literature was received simply upon the authority of tradition, and the necessity was felt of establishing from Scripture the validity of belief and of practice. The principle of scriptural authority was thus native to the primitive Christian community by reason of its Jewish origin, even though it did not for some time possess an authoritative literature of its own.

The church Fathers who were the first theologians of Christianity in that they regarded it as a perfect revelation of truth to be commended as such by appropriate arguments to the wisdom-seeking Greek spirit, still further extended the dogmatic and apologetic use of the Scriptures. Thus Justin Martyr identifies every self-manifestation of God in the Old Testament with the Logos. All the Fathers, in various degrees, ignore the historical and literal sense of Scripture and emphasize its hidden or spiritual meaning. The Allegorical method of interpretation, by which any desired sense could be extracted from the words, reigned supreme from Clement of Alexandria to Augustine, and the findings of the method were dictated by the requirements of church dogmatic in the form of the "rule of faith" (sometimes called "the rule of the truth"). The dictum of Origen that "nothing is to be accepted as truth which differs in any respect from ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition expressed the dominant exegetical attitude."

We may say, therefore, that the influence of Scripture upon the form and content of Greek and Latin theology was comparatively

unimportant, in the sense of objective authority. The occasion for such a doctrine and usage of Scripture could not arise so long as the complete truth of the traditional ecclesiastical doctrine was assumed and the absolute teaching authority of the Church was recognized. The Gnostic conflict, indeed, compelled the Church to collect and appropriate such Christian documents as were held to be of apostolic origin or authority, and to form them into a Christian Canon. These books were further assumed to be in full accord with the doctrinal tradition and were so expounded by the same methods of interpretation as had been applied to the Old Testament. The demand for a theological norm superior to the Church and the Fathers became urgent and irrepressible only with the development of the Protestant Reformation. Since they were antagonizing sharply the authority of the infallible Church with regard to important practices involving (though they knew it not) the whole scheme of Church doctrine, the Reformers had need of another infallible authority by which to support their position. This they found in Holy Scripture. But, although the Reformation profited to a large degree by the scholarly ideals of the Humanist movement, it was not delivered from an essentially dogmatic and subjective attitude toward the Bible. Upon the one hand, Luther assumed the doctrine of Justification by Faith as the doctrinal center of Scripture and used it as a critical principle, while Calvin, upon the other hand, expounded the Bible in the light of the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty. The attitude of Luther regarding the full doctrinal authority of the Bible was, upon the whole, wavering and undecided, while Calvin, upon the contrary, was an uncompromising advocate of Scripture infallibility.

As the controversy between Protestantism and Catholicism progressed, and as polemic strife between the divisions of the former waxed ever fiercer, the doctrine of Scripture was developed to conclusions more and more extreme. The object of the theologians who constructed the old Protestant doctrine of Scripture was to secure its sole authority as "Word of God" over against the claims of the Roman church for its tradition and its teaching function. These latter were, by the Protestant theologians, described as "Word of Man", and were denied any except a derived authority.

The sole and supreme authority of Scripture had to be validated as against the Roman position in three particulars, namely,—(1) that the Scripture is itself guaranteed by the Church; (2) that Church tradition is an independent source of doctrine along with Scripture; and, (3) that the Scriptures cannot be correctly interpreted except in analogy with the Church doctrine. Furthermore, aside from the anti-Roman polemic, there was need of erecting a doctrine of Scripture against the fanatical Protestant sects who claimed an "inner illumination", and against those who urged the rights of natural reason in matters of faith and doctrine. Manifestly, nothing could meet the situation except a theory that should exclude the element of human activity absolutely from any share in the formation of Scripture; and should constitute it in every part the pure "Word of God." Such a theory was furnished by the post-Reformation doctrine of Inspiration, by which the whole literature of the Old and New Testament was referred directly to the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit, and its character as a divine revelation of truth was guaranteed. The Holy Spirit was affirmed to impart to the biblical writers not only the substance of truth, but also the very words, and the actual impulse to write. As against the Roman claim that the Church guarantees the Scriptures in that it collected the books and promulgated the canon, it was replied that no such authentication would be sufficient, but that God Himself must and does witness to His Word by and with the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. In reply to the assertion that the Church doctrine supplements the teaching of Scripture, the Protestant theologians affirmed the sufficiency of Scripture for all knowledge necessary to salvation. The need of the Church dogma as a key to interpretation was denied in favor of the perspicuity of Scripture, by which was meant primarily its self-interpreting quality for religious and doctrinal purposes. This doctrine, it was, which led to strong emphasis upon certain portions of Scripture, and certain proof-texts as the clear outlines of doctrine and positive statements of truth in the light of which all obscurer passages were to be understood.[2]

[2] For a good account of the various methods of interpretation employed in the successive periods of Christianity see series of articles in the *Biblical World*, Vol. 38 by Case, Gilbert and Smith.

The merits and demerits of this Inspiration doctrine with the theory of Scripture which it involves, do not claim consideration here. Suffice it to say it has been shown to be psychologically impossible, and out of all accord with the facts as they appear in the biblical literature itself. It has, therefore, been gradually dissolved, and the Scriptures have been reduced to the plane of historical phenomena in which human activity has had a large part to play, and in the understanding of which strict historical methods of study must be employed. To this result the sciences of Textual Criticism, Introduction, and Biblical Theology have mainly contributed. It has always been known that we have not the original autographs of the Scripture documents, which, upon the hypothesis of the defenders of inerrancy, would exhibit that perfection and infallibility claimed. Textual Criticism while making clear the discrepancies that exist among the Mss. we have, also shows that the further back we press the less do we find conditions in the text that answer to the demands of the theory.[3] The science of Introduction has shown how intimately the biblical books are related to the historical conditions of their origin, and has made impossible the sharp separation of these documents from other historical sources of knowledge. Biblical Theology has thrown into prominence the variety of the doctrinal contents of Scripture, and has raised the question of the nature and extent of that unity which has been alleged or may be supposed to underlie the diversity. As a result of these discoveries, Protestant theology resting as it has done upon a view of the Scriptures now found to be untenable in the form it has been held, finds itself in a condition of confusion and distress.

Yet, as we have said, the school of theologians under consideration, still maintains the normativity of Scripture in theological construction, and it is the purpose of this treatise to note the nature, extent and results of such theory and practice.

Inasmuch as all Christian theology, orthodox or heretical, conservative or radical must in some sense appeal to Scripture, it is necessary to define more precisely the school of theological opinion which is the subject of this investigation. The writer is aware that in his title he has adopted an arbitrary conception of Orthodoxy, and one, indeed, to which he would be slow to yield assent. But this is what he means. The orthodox theologian is one who holds

[3] Cf. Evans and Smith, *Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration,* pp. 37, 38.

to the notion of Christianity as essentially and necessarily consisting in an objective system of truth delivered to the human mind by special and supernatural revelation, and recorded or preserved in the Bible. This system of divine truth thus given is regarded as a fixed *quantum,* to be received, assimilated and applied to life in order to a full and characteristic Christian experience, and in order to the complete results purposed by God in giving it.

The order of treatment will be as follows: *First,* we will seek to discover and define each theologian's doctrine of Scripture as he consciously holds it. Under this head will fall to be considered such notions as Revelation, Inspiration, and the Unity of Scripture as a whole. *Second,* we will point out in the case of our several authors their religious, dogmatic, or speculative interests, and show how these operate in the theological use of the Scriptures, particularly in interpretation and in emphasis placed upon definite portions of Scripture. *Third,* we will tabulate the results that appear from our whole survey. *Fourth,* and finally, we will indicate in what direction our results seem to point as regards the relation the Scriptures may sustain toward present theological science in order to impart to it that moral and spiritual power which has ever characterized the Christian religion itself.

CHAPTER II.

THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

It is, as we have already stated, the fundamental postulate of our school of theologians, that God has given a special and supernatural revelation of truth to the world upon the understanding and acceptance of which true and adequate religion can alone rest. This revelation is closely associated with the Bible, and only concerning the exact nature and content of the revelation, and the exact relation sustained to it by the Bible as a whole do we find varieties of opinion.

There is, first of all, the view which lies nearest the strict post-Reformation doctrine, and which virtually identifies revelation and Scripture. This position was represented by Doctor Charles Hodge and has since been defended in all essential respects by the Princeton school. According to Doctor Hodge the Bible consists of a revelation of facts and truths, which, taken in their entirety, properly related and interpreted, constitute one system of divine truth.[1] In virtue of its character as the exhaustive expression of truth and fact necessary to the complete exhibition of the Christian religion the Bible becomes the exclusive source and norm of theology as a science. But just as Nature does not contain a system of Astronomy, or Chemistry but only the undigested facts which science must arrange and relate; so the Bible contains no system of Theology in explicit form, but only the facts and truths which, when they are properly apprehended and understood will be found to cohere in one harmonious whole. This system of revealed truth in its organic unity, it is the task of theology to discover, set forth and vindicate.[2]

In this connection, however, a little inconsistently, it would seem, Doctor Hodge points out an advantage which the theologian has over the student of Nature when he says, ... "although the Scriptures do not contain a system of theology as a whole, we have in the Epistles of the New Testament, portions of that system wrought out to our hand. These are our authority and guide."[3]

[1] Systematic Theology, Vol. I, pp. 1, 2, 13.

[2] Ibid, p. 3.

[3] Op. cit., p. 3.

In the view of this theologian so close is the relation between revelation and Scripture that there is no revelation external to the Bible that can materially concern theology. Upon the one hand, the Bible contains all the facts with which theology deals, and upon the other hand theology must deal with all the facts the Bible contains. There must be a careful, comprehensive and, if possible, even an exhaustive induction of Scripture facts. Then the complete doctrine or system must be so framed as to "embrace all the facts in their integrity."[4] "It is . . . . . unscientific for the theologian to assume a theory as to the nature of virtue, of sin, of liberty, of moral obligation, and then explain the facts of Scripture in accordance with his theories" . . . . . "If the Scriptures teach that sin is hereditary we must adopt a theory of sin suited to that fact."[5]

The final outcome of Doctor Hodge's view is that there is and can be but one legitimate system of theology which is, according to his conviction, the Augustinian system. "As the facts of Astronomy arrange themselves in a certain order, and will admit of no other, so it is with the facts of theology. Theology is, therefore, the exhibition of the facts of Scripture in their proper order and relation, with the principles or general truths involved in the facts themselves, and which pervade and harmonize the whole."[6]

Quite in accord with these statements of Doctor Hodge are the views of the Princeton theologians of more recent times. Professor Benjamin B. Warfield, for example, describes himself as "one who has in all sincerity and heartiness set his hand to these (the Westminster) Standards as containing the system of doctrine taught in Holy scripture."[7] "It would be easy to show . . . . . how strictly they (the Standards) are held in every definition to the purity of biblical conceptions and enunciations of truth."[8]

The essence of Christianity is held to be constituted, not by eventual facts but by "the dogmas, i. e. by the facts as understood in one specific manner." "There lies at the basis of Christianity not

[4] Ibid, p. 13.

[5] Ibid, pp. 13, 14.

[6] Ibid, p. 19.

[7] The Significance of the Westminster Standards, p. 1.

[8] Ibid, p. 35.

only a series of great redemptive facts, but also an authoritative interpretation of these facts. Amid the, perhaps, many interpretations possible to this series of facts, who will help us to that one through which alone they can constitute Christianity?''[9] ''The Apostolic interpretation is an inseparable element in the fundamental fact basis of Christianity . . . . . Call it metaphysical, call it Greek if you will. But remember that it is of the essence of Christianity.''[10]

To the same general effect writes President A. H. Strong regarding the character of the Bible as a revelation of doctrinal truth and as constituting the objective standard of appeal in theology,[11] although, as we shall see later, he tries to escape from mere biblicism by means of his Christo-centric principle. ''Theology,'' he says, ''is a summary and explanation of the content of God's self-revelations. These are, first, the revelation of God in Nature; secondly, and supremely, the revelation of God in the Scriptures.'' ''Revelation is an organic whole which begins in nature but finds its climax and key in the historical Christ whom Scripture presents to us.'' ''The phrase, 'Word of God' does not primarily denote a record, it is the spoken word, the doctrine, the vitalizing truth disclosed by Christ.''[12]

President Strong reproduces in almost identical terms the affirmation already cited from Doctor Hodge with reference to parts of the system of doctrine wrought out in the Epistles of the New Testament, and constituting the center of the complete system of divine truth which is implicit in the whole of Scripture.[13] Likewise in agreement with Doctor Hodge, he urges upon Christians the obligation to receive the biblical doctrines as revealed facts whether they can be demonstrated upon rational grounds or not, or whether or no it be possible to see the connection between them.[14]

Somewhat different is the emphasis of Professor James Orr. More conscious than many of his orthodox colleagues of the critical

[9] The Right of Systematic Theology, pp. 38, 39.

[10] Ibid, pp. 61, 62. Vide quotation from Denney p. 67 of this treatise.

[11] Strong, Systematic Theology, Vol. I, pp. 27, 28.

[12] Ibid, pp. 25, 26, 27.

[13] Ibid, p. 15.

[14] Ibid, p. 36.

and scientific difficulties that attend the maintenance of the usual Protestant doctrine of Holy Scripture, he seeks to ground its authority in a religio-historical view of revelation, rather than in what he calls a "doctrinaire view." In his Elliot Lectures, delivered in 1897 Professor Orr said that "A doctrine of Scripture adapted to the needs of the hour in harmonizing the demands at once of Science and Faith, is, perhaps, the most clamant want at present in theology."[15]

Such a doctrine he endeavors to state in his recent volume entitled "Revelation and Inspiration" (*Scribners* 1910) from which we shall quote repeatedly in this discussion. Briefly stated his view is as follows:

The Bible possesses in remarkable degree a structural unity which is due to the presence in it and running through it of God's progressive self-revelation. This revelation is what we speak of as the Gospel, and this, criticism can never expunge from the Bible. It forms a "continuous, coherent, self-attesting discovery to man of the mind of God regarding man himself, his sin, the guilt and ruin into which sin has plunged him, and over against that the method of a divine salvation, the outcome of a purpose of eternal love, wrought out in ages of progressive revelation, and culminating in the mission, life, death, atoning work, and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ, and in the gift of His Spirit to the Church and believers."[16] This Gospel in the Bible will preserve the Bible which embodies it, and will attest the Scriptures as what "they claim to be, the living and inspired oracles of God."[17] "The Christian believer is, therefore, not anxious about the supposed destructive results of Criticism. Its excesses will ever be blocked and checked by the presence of this evangelical element which runs continuously throughout Scripture." "Accepting a supernatural economy of grace as the central fact of revelation, it (this view) will not be trammeled by the *a priori* presumptions about miracle which are apt to vitiate purely critical theories. For miracle is of the very essence of the economy. It is able to take up firmer ground on historicity, for it sees the meaning and place of the great facts in the biblical history, as other

[15] The Progress of Dogma, p. 352.

[16] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 18.

[17] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 19.

theories do not. It recognizes a line of divine revelation extending through all time. It is, therefore, prepared to accept the fact of a record of such special, continuous, supernatural revelation."[18]

This view Professor Orr describes as Evangelical-Positive, and considers it to exhibit an advance in several points upon the older positions. "Instead of revelation being regarded as consisting simply or exclusively of the communication of truths or ideas through internal suggestion, illumination, or intuition—the doctrinaire view of revelation, as the late Professor A. B. Bruce called it—its essence is seen to lie, primarily, in a series of divine acts; God manifesting Himself in the history of the world in a supernatural manner and for a special purpose."[19]

"It is an important advance when, in accordance with the biblical conception itself, the stress is shifted back, even from prophetic and apostolic teaching to the divine acts which stand behind both"[20]

But the principle advance in this way of treating the subject Professor Orr regards as the more accurate discrimination of the related ideas of Revelation and Inspiration. What he conceives this gain to be, and what results flow from it we shall see later. At present we are concerned to know just what the gain is in transferring the conception of revelation from doctrine (teaching) to act (history). Professor Orr has hardly made the distinction until we find him busy bringing back under the head of an extension of the idea of Revelation practically all that was included in the older theory he considers to be transcended. He tells us that "it is not simply the history of revelation on its divine side which is of spiritual interest, but the human reception also of that revelation, and the actings of the human spirit under its influence, and in response to it, which are to be taken into account. This also is a *necessary part of the unfolding of the meaning of revelation* (italics mine) . . . . . a record of revelation in the broad sense includes a great deal more than the divine acts and communications, or even than the history with which we began. It includes psalms, songs, wisdom teaching,

[18] Ibid, pp. 20, 21.

[19] Ibid, pp. 21, 22.

[20] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 22.

Epistles . . . . . sections that unfold the principles of revelation, apply and enforce them, turn them into subjects of praise, *deal with them reflectively as doctrine.* All this is too, in a very important sense, revelation" . . . . . "We have now found that the line between revelation and its record is becoming very thin, and that in another true sense, *the record* in the fulness of its content, is *for us itself the revelation* . . . . . God's complete word— for us"[21]

It is difficult to see, upon this showing, wherein Professor Orr has lightened the load theology had to bear upon the premises of the older "doctrinaire" theory of revelation. Practically all the difficulties that beset the latter are, in a slightly different form, transferred to the historical field. Professor Orr must maintain the substantial historicity of the whole biblical representation, in its parts and in its *ensemble.* Furthermore, he must maintain, as he does, that there is a doctrinal development in Scripture correctly and adequately interpreting the revelation essentially contained in the divine acts and communications. "A like organic unity, combined with progressive development, it might be shown, reveals itself in doctrine. While throwing off, or suffering to fall into the background what is accidental or temporary, each stage in the advance of revelation takes up what is vital and permanent in the preceding stage. No single grain of the word of God 'which liveth and abideth' is allowed to perish in the process."[22]

Although he claims to have transcended the "doctrinaire theory" of revelation Professor Orr would seem to hold to the essentially doctrinal nature of Christianity almost as strongly as Professor Warfield or Doctor Hodge. Replying to the statement that Christianity is a "fact revelation—it has its center in a living Christ, and not in a dogmatic creed," he writes, "The facts of revelation are before the doctrines built on them. The gospel is no mere proclamation of 'eternal truths', but the discovery of a saving purpose of God for mankind, executed in Time. But the doctrines are the interpretation of the facts. The facts do not stand blank and dumb before us, but have *a voice given to them, and a meaning put into them"* (italics mine). When Paul affirms, "Christ died for our

[21] Ibid, pp. 158, 159.

[22] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 17.

sins according to the Scriptures, he is proclaiming a fact, but he is at the same time giving an interpretation of it."[23]

Undoubtedly Professor Orr regards the Bible as containing an organism of doctrinal truth no less intimate and vital to Christianity than the coherent, continuous series of historical acts in which revelation is alleged primarily to consist. What this organism is he has set forth exhaustively in his Kerr Lectures, under the title, "The Christian View of God and the World"—a volume which will claim our attention later.

The point that more particularly concerns us here is that our theologian has bound up, practically the whole traditional theology with the Redemption History, as he calls it, and has identified it with the Gospel. Hence proceeds his resistance of Criticism at every point involving historical reconstruction. In this respect Doctor Orr seems to have experienced a change of conviction since the deliverance of his Kerr Lectures in 1890-91. He then declared that the critical re-dating of the Old Testament documents does not affect the argument for the revelation character of the Old Testament religion. "The Biblical conception is separated from every other by its monotheistic basis, its unique clearness, its organic unity, its moral character and its theological aim. It does not matter for this argument what dates we assign to the books of the Old Testament in which these views are found . . . . . Date your books when you will this religion is not explicable save on the hypothesis of Revelation."[24] But in 1910 he complains that upon the critical basis the history undergoes complete transformation, so that the order of events as gleaned from the Bible itself is reversed. Upon this state of matters he remarks, "It need not occasion surprise if this critical view of Israel's history is felt by many, by no means narrow-minded, to be well-nigh fatal to the pretensions of the Old Testament to be a record of a real divine revelation. . . . . *It is not on such a basis that the present writer can undertake to defend the reality of revelation and inspiration in the Old Testament.*"[25] (italics mine)

[23] The Christian View of God and the World, pp. 25, 26, So. Warfield, and Denney, Studies in Theol., pp. 106-107.

[24] CVGW, p. 17.

[25] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 71.

This seems clear and emphatic and yet elsewhere in the same volume our author claims to regard it as one of the important gains from the critical movement that application of the strictest historical and critical methods has only served to show the absolutely unique and extraordinary character of the religion of Israel. "The further inquiry has gone, the tendency has increasingly been to force from the lips of the critics themselves the word 'revelation.'"[26]

It seems difficult to harmonize these two statements in the later volume, or the first of them with that cited from the former. It would seem to be safe to defend the reality of Old Testament revelation upon the basis of methods and results which are so beneficent in the case of those who specially cultivate them. But the nature and content of the revelation which Professor Orr understands some critics to admit, does not accord with the nature and content of that which he himself is set to defend.

The critical reconstruction of the history can hardly be opposed successfully if the critical dating of the documents be allowed. Hence Professor Orr has argued strongly upon critical and archaeological grounds against the prevailing view, but as is clearly evident in the volume so often cited, his main reliance is upon a religio-dogmatic presupposition. In illustration of this the following lengthy passage is worth quoting. "The general trustworthiness of the history . . . . . is, apart from other reasons, believed to be internally guaranteed by the depth and organic character—the forward movement under the direction of a divine purpose—of the ideas embodied in it. Here, on the surface of the record, is something which it lies beyond the capacity of irresponsible editors or collectors of legends, or even of late prophetically minded men, to invent or introduce into the substance of a national folk-lore . . . . . For any one taking this view of the history, it will be found difficult to believe that the patriarchs are the wholly mythical or legendary figures many would make them out to be, or that the covenants and promises of that early age were unreal. It will be found difficult to believe that Moses was not divinely raised up and commissioned, and did not, by divine command lead the enslaved Israelites out of Egypt and across the Red Sea, to form at Sinai a

[26] Ibid, pp. 13, 14.

religious covenant between them and Jehovah which pledged them ever after to be His people. It will be found difficult to believe that Moses did not then and after give to the people laws and ordinances—both civil and priestly in substance identical with those in the books which record his legislation . . . . . and so with the remainder of the history.''[27]

Professor Orr has used the cautious phrase, ''it will be difficult'', but in his own case he has practically said it is impossible not to accept substantially the whole traditional view of the biblical history. But while he has ostensibly thrown the whole question into the field of historical fact, it is manifest that he proposes to settle it, in the last resort, by other than historical means. As the basis of his whole contention he affirms the presence in and throughout the Bible of what he calls ''a self-attesting, coherent scheme of redemption'' constituting divine revelation and guaranteeing the veridical character of every historical matter purporting to be involved therewith. It is in line with this that Professor Orr is reluctant to admit that the book of Jonah is a work of religious fiction, or that there is any considerable amount of legendary material in the accounts of the Patriarchal or Mosaic periods.

With some rather important qualifications, we may include, along with Professor Orr's view, that of Professor James Denney. He holds that the religious and moral power of the gospel within the Scriptures attest their character as revelation documents prior to and independent of any theory of inspiration. It is the presence of this gospel certified by the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer, that assures him of God's voice in Holy Scripture, and it is this gospel, thus certified, that determines for him what view he is able, inclined or necessitated to take with reference to the critical questions raised concerning the various distinctive parts of the Bible.

''The Bible is, in the first instance, a means of grace: it is *the* means too through which God communicates with man, making him know what is in his heart towards him. It must be known and experienced in this character before we can form a doctrine concerning it.''[28]

[27] Revelation and Inspiration, pp. 72, 73.

[28] Studies in Theology, p. 202.

"The expression 'Word of God' relates to the divine message to man and is not to be construed as if it were a doctrine of the text of Scripture, or as covering not only certain assumed qualities of Scripture as we have it, but also certain alleged qualities of an original autograph of Scripture which no one knows anything about."[29]

The most important difference between the positions of Orr and Denney relates to the content of the gospel which constitutes the divine revelation, and which by its presence attests the Bible as its authentic record. As we have seen, Orr includes the whole progressive self-revelation of God in His redemptive plan and purpose from the opening chapters of Genesis to the conclusion of the apostolic interpretation in the New Testament. Professor Denney, on the other hand, has a more strictly experimental and Christo-centric position. The limits within which the witness of the Spirit to the Scriptures is held to guarantee historical truth are by him reduced to one point, viz., the revelation of God in Christ. Thus he is able to view the findings of historical criticism with much less concern than Orr, and to admit the presence of myth and legend to a degree the latter cannot. "We do not need to become historical critics before we can believe in Christ and be saved by him. The Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word of the evangelists in our hearts, gives us, independent of any criticism, a full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the revelation of God made in Him. And if any one still maintains that this does forestall criticism, I should say that the very meaning of the Incarnation, the truth on which all Christianity depends, is precisely this, that there *is* a point, viz., the life of The Son of God in our nature, at which the spiritual and the historical coincide and at which, therefore, as the very purpose of revelation requires, there can be a spiritual guarantee for historical truth. The witness of the Spirit to the believer enables him to take, not only *de facto* but *de jure,* the life of Christ recorded in the gospels as a real historical life."[30] "The gospels have every quality which they need, to put us in contact with the gospel; they do put us in contact with it, and the Spirit makes it sure to our

[29] Ibid, p. 205.

[30] Studies in Theology, p. 207.

faith; why should we ask more from them."[31] Secure in this position of faith with its sufficient implication of historical verity Professor Denney allows the largest freedom to Christian men in critical details of the evangelistic record. "Though in any number of cases of this kind the gospels should be proved in error, the gospel is untouched."[32]

Having thus established himself in the gospel Professor Denney proceeds to base the authority of all Scripture, the Old Testament and the apostolic interpretation upon the authority of Jesus and the Spirit's testimony in the heart of the believer. How far this authenticates the Old Testament as a whole either in its doctrines or in its historical accounts will appear from the following citations.

"Jesus used the Scriptures of the Old Testament . . . . . as a means of fellowship with his Father in Heaven . . . . . we can point to express words of Jesus in which the authority of the Old Testament is recognized, and even used in argument with the Jews . . . . . Sayings like these assure us that Jesus, at all events, found in the Scriptures a true revelation of God; as he read, the Father spoke to him. . . . . If it is too much to say that His coming and His work are clearly predicted in them, it is not too much to say that they are clearly pre-figured. . . . . In other words, the Old Testament is vitally and not only casually and chronologically connected with the New . . . . . the early Christians used it without embarrassment as a Christian book. When they quote from it they always quote in a Christian sense. . . . . It is possible to err in detail, if we read the Old Testament in this way; *it may even be possible to err in every detail and yet not err on the whole.* For it is the same Word of God which became incarnate in Jesus that speaks to the heart in the ancient Scriptures."[33] (Italics mine)

This extensive quotation is given in order to bring out strongly the contrast between the doctrine of Denney and that of Orr. According to the latter the revelation of the Old Testament (and the New as well) is contained primarily in the history, and to misunderstand or falsify the history is to miss the revelation. What else can be understood from a passage like the following.

[31] Ibid, p. 208.
[32] Ibid, p. 209.
[33] Ibid, pp. 209-211.

"It was really in the prophet's *message to his own times* that the essence of his prophecy lay. The prophet was, in the first instance, a messenger to his own age and people; the message he brought was one called forth by the needs of his age, and in form and substance was adapted to those needs. It does not follow, because of this, that it was a message *only* for his own time and did not embody a revelation of God of universal import, fitted to take its place in the general organism of revelation . . . . . The chief thing to be observed at present is the intimate relation which prophecy always sustains to the historical conditions out of which it springs. The *historical setting can never be ignored, if prophecy is to be understood.*" (italics mine)[34] To be consistent with his whole position it would seem that Professor Orr must maintain the necessity of the prophet himself correctly apprehending the historical situation, and also of the one who reads the prophetic message correctly grasping its meaning in relation to the historical setting. Otherwise the essence of the revelation will be missed.

Now, if, as Denney says, it is possible to err in every detail of the historical understanding of the Old Testament while reading it in a Christian sense, and yet not err on the whole, then that intimate association of revelation with history, which Professor Orr maintains, simply does not exist. It is not upon such a basis that the latter could undertake to defend the reality of revelation and inspiration in the Old Testament.

The extent to which the authority of Jesus and the witness of the Spirit authenticates the historicity of miraculous details in the Old Testament Denney indicates as follows:

"The witness of the Spirit, by and with the word in the soul, does not guarantee the historicity of miraculous details, but it does guarantee the presence of a supernatural element in the history recorded. It bars out a criticism which denies the supernatural on principle, and refuses to recognize a unique work of God as in process along this line."[35]

With this reservation our theologian allows to Criticism full freedom and rejoices in its achievements, especially in the field of prophecy. Indeed, he carefully refrains from defining the super-

[34] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 93.

[35] Studies in Theology, p. 212.

natural element whose presence in the Old Testament history he alleges to be guaranteed by the witness of the Spirit. As regards the narratives of the Old Testament also, he makes admissions that upon Orr's theory must be considered extremely damaging. For example, he affirms that the stories of beginnings in the early chapters of Genesis are pure myths resting upon no basis of record or of tradition.[36] Professor Orr, upon the contrary, maintains that these stories while containing elements of poetry and symbolism nevertheless rest upon a sound tradition of actual transactions, and are, therefore, to be distinguished rigidly from "myth" which is a pure creation of the imagination.[37] It becomes apparent what a jealous mistress Professor Orr's theory of historical revelation can be when coupled with the traditional theological scheme.

As touching the authority of the apostolic doctrinal interpretation of the facts of Christ, Denney is, indeed, somewhat more concerned. As a New Testament theologian he is zealous for the value of the New Testament as a theological standard. He feels it necessary, not so much in his later as in his earlier writings, to maintain a strict doctrinal unity or harmony between (a) the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic gospels and the interpretation of the apostolic writings, and (b) the several interpretations of the various New Testament books or groups of books. It has been noted, and attention has been called to the fact that Professor Denney's theologizing in his earlier books, was largely in forgetfulness of his doctrine of Scripture, laid down in the Ninth Lecture of his Studies in Theology. How far this is true, and the difference that appears in his later volumes we will have occasion to point out in the succeeding chapter. Here it is sufficient to remark that Denney employs the usual arguments to gain a certain *a priori* credit for the apostolic theology. "The Holy Spirit was given to enable the apostles to interpret the revelation contained in the life, death and exaltation of Jesus." The apostles were conscious that their gospel, with the expiatory significance of the death of Christ, as its central doctrine was not taught them by man. Such considerations are urged in addition to the argument from the internal testimony of the Spirit, as reasons why the apostolic form of thought should be accorded special honor and authority.

[36] Studies in Theology, p. 218.

[37] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 166. So Hodge, and Curtis.

It is believed by the writer that the views of the five theologians whose positions we have been expounding and comparing, represent all the important aspects of orthodox opinion upon the subject under consideration. Different shades and combinations of the same views appear, but no significant additions. Professor Olin Curtis, for example, presents a peculiar combination of the positions of Orr and Denney. He grounds the authority of the Bible upon its character as a moral dynamic, which character it has by virtue of its relation to Jesus Christ, and the divine redemptive plan that culminates in Him and His work. This plan is intimately involved with the whole course of the history recorded in the Old Testament, and receives its complete interpretation at the hands of the apostles from the point of view of a finished work—accomplished by Jesus in his death. With Orr, therefore, Curtis feels the necessity of maintaining the historical and scientific character of whatever details affect the redemptive plan, e. g., the Creation and Fall stories. He speaks of the Bible as "a redemptional organism of fact and doctrine." Manifestly in his doctrine of Scripture he is more nearly allied with the position of Orr, but, as we shall see, he is theologically in much closer accord with Denney—a fact which is not without significance in relation to our main inquiry.

We may now pass to the consideration of the various views of Inspiration that accompany the conception of Revelation and the relation of Scripture thereto. Doctrines of Inspiration appear historically to be, in part, reflexes of the prior and more fundamental doctrine of supernatural revelation; in part, instruments to serve polemic need; and, in part, the pure results of traditional theological obligation. The logical priority and superiority of the doctrine of revelation, as also the secondary, formal character of that of Inspiration is nowhere more forcefully stated than by the late Professor C. M. Mead, who was himself so stanch and able a defender of Orthodox positions in general. "There would be no occasion for asserting and no ground for believing, that the biblical writers were divinely inspired, unless there were antecedently an assumption that it was a divine revelation which they were especially commissioned to describe. The writers are believed to have been inspired, because there is believed to have been an all important revelation which needed to be carefully recorded." [38] Ac-

[38] Supernatural Revelation, p. 281.

cordingly, as is the revelation so must the inspiration be. But, a doctrine of revelation may be the result of reflection upon religious experience, or it may be determined by an objective study of the historical phenomena as recorded in the literature of a given religious movement. As we have pointed out, the post-Reformation doctrine of Inspiration was developed under the stress of polemic needs. The Protestant theologians were confronted by an ecclesiastical institution possessing a system of doctrinal truth scholastically formulated and defended, and claiming absolute authority for its teaching function. This institution and its claims could be opposed only by the erection of Scripture into an infallible authority, and by the imputation to it of the same doctrinal revelation character as that of the church system. Since revelation was scholastically conceived, and since the Bible was identified with it, every part of the Bible had to be guaranteed a place in the system. To afford this guarantee was the function of the fully developed verbal or plenary theories of Inspiration. Thus it will be seen that this doctrine of Inspiration was attached to the Christian religion in quite a superficial and adventitious way. It never obtained any definite and emphatic expression in the greater Symbols of the Church, and was, therefore destined to pass away with the arrival of new conditions. The conditions that did develope are these: (a) The battle between Protestantism and Catholicism wore itself out, and Protestant theology ceased to be determined mainly or directly by the exigencies of anti-Roman polemic. (b) The endless controversies between the divided camps of Protestantism caused the most honest and competent minds to question the validity of the doctrine of Scripture acknowledged by all, seeing that, in fact, it did not yield the result it was alleged to promise. It did not yield that one clear and indisputable system of doctrinal truth that an assumed divine revelation recorded in a fully inspired Bible ought necessarily to convey to the human mind. (3) The application of scientific, literary, and historical method to the study of Scripture made it possible and necessary, for the first time, to determine the doctrine of Scripture, and therewith the doctrine of revelation, by an induction of the objective facts of Scripture itself. This, it is, that most of all dissolved the fictitious literary theory that was built up to answer an apologetic need, with no scientific consciousness of the actual phenomena of the literature upon which it was imposed.

Hence the need now felt of distinguishing between Revelation and its record, and of finding a more modest function for Inspiration in proportion to the altered conception of revelation itself. Manifestly, in so far as any given theologian is consistent with himself, his theory of inspiration may be graded with reference to the distance he has traveled away from the scholastic theory of revelation under the demands of which the extreme high theory of inspiration was formed. But, inasmuch as theologians are human, we will find them yielding to other considerations than those of strict logical consistency. They have a theological heritage, an ecclesiastical constituency, and there are present day apologetic needs. We have seen how the theologians of the school under consideration stand upon the question of Revelation and the general doctrine of Scripture authority. We may now conclude this chapter with a brief conspectus of their views upon the more special doctrine of Inspiration.

Doctor Charles Hodge, as a dogmatician standing frankly upon the Westminster Confession, felt no obligation to ground the Christian revelation upon considerations external to the authority of Scripture itself as the fully inspired document of revelation. According to his view it is their inspiration that constitutes the Scriptures the "Word of God," and imparts to them their exclusive and infallible authority as source and norm of theology.[39] Nevertheless he distinguishes between Revelation and Inspiration, places the former logically before the latter and states succinctly the lines upon which the revelation in the Bible might be proved independently of the doctrine of inspiration. His suggestions at this point are those that have since been developed *in extenso* by such writers, e. g., as Orr. (a) The organic unity of the Scriptures proves them to be the product of one mind, which can be no other than the mind of God. (b) The adaptation to our souls of the truths revealed in the Bible, induces us to receive them and the Bible that contains them, as true, hence as divine, and therefore a supernatural revelation plenarily inspired. (c) Supremely we receive the doctrine upon the authority of Jesus. "We believe the Scriptures because Christ declares them to be the Word of God."[40] As regards the distinction between Revelation and Inspiration Doctor Hodge and his successors of the Princeton school are in close

[39] Systematic Theol., Vol. I, p. 153.

[40] Ibid, pp. 166-168.

agreement. Revelation and Inspiration differ both as to their objects and effects. By the former, knowledge is communicated to the human mind; by the latter infallibility in teaching is secured.[41] Professors A. A. Hodge and Warfield, indeed, feel the need of divorcing more decisively the religious and apologetic interest in the reality of a divine revelation in Scripture, and the theologico-dogmatic interest in the doctrine of inspiration. They urge that the truth of Christianity does not depend upon any theory of inspiration, and that revelation came, in large part, before its record. Nevertheless they hold as firmly as Doctor Charles Hodge to the theory of a plenarily inspired Bible as fundamental to interpretation and hence to the scientific theological use of Scripture. "Very many religious and historical truths must be established before we come to the question of inspiration; as, for instance, the being and moral government of God, the fallen condition of man, the fact of a redemptive scheme, the general historical truth of the Scriptures, and the validity and authority of the revelation of God's will, which they contain—i. e., the general truth of Christianity and its doctrines. Hence it follows that while the inspiration of the Scriptures is true, and being true is a principle fundamental to the adequate interpretation of Scripture, it is, nevertheless, in the first instance, not a principle fundamental to the truth of the Christian religion." [42]

It is not to be supposed that our theologians would expect to establish the "general truth of Christianity and its doctrines" without using the Scriptures. But, as such use, independent of the doctrine of Inspiration could not include the adequate interpretation of them, we are entitled to infer to a distinction between the use of Scripture for apologetic purposes, and its use for theological construction in the scientific sense. What this quality or value is, which inspiration imparts to Scripture, for those who hold to inspiration is suggested in the following passage. Arguing against those who restrict inspiration to the divine element in the revelation, and who maintain that the sacred writers were left to their own human resources in the thinking out, narration, exposition, and record of the divine truth, these theologians say—"This view gives up the

[41] Ibid, pp. 155, 156. Cf. also Hodge and Warfield, Presb. Review, 1881, p. 225 ff.

[42] Presbyterian Review, April 1881, pp. 226, 227.

whole matter of the immediate divine authorship of the Bible as the Word of God, and its infallibility and authority as a rule of faith and practice. We have only the several versions of God's revelations, as rendered mentally and verbally more or less accurately and adequately, yet always imperfectly by the different sacred writers."[43] Evidently these writers are laboring to secure for Scripture an external authority which shall serve the purpose of dogmatics in a way and to a degree that the authority based upon their purely moral and religious appeal cannot do. They express the heart of the matter when they say—"If the new views are untrue, they threaten, not only to shake the confidence of men in the Scriptures, but the very Scriptures themselves as an objective ground of faith."[44] We may pass over the curious dilemma suggested by this language. It would have been embarrassing to say that true views would shake the confidence of men in the Scriptures, or the Scriptures themselves, nor does it seem complimentary either to men or Scriptures to intimate that such results would follow from untrue views. The meat of the matter lies in the expression—"the very Scriptures themselves as an objective ground of faith." "It would assuredly appear that as no organism can be stronger than its weakest part, that if error be found in any one element or in any class of statements, certainty as to any portion could rise no higher than belongs to that exercise of human reason to which it will be left to discriminate the infallible from the fallible."[45]

In the theology of President A. H. Strong we may note important abatements of the high theory of inspiration held by the Princeton school and expressed by himself in earlier editions of his Systematic Theology. "Inspiration," he now says, "is that influence of the Spirit of God upon the minds of the Scripture writers which made their writings the record of a progressive divine revelation sufficient when taken together and interpreted by the same Spirit who in-

[43] Ibid, p. 232. Cf. also A. H. Strong, Syst. Theol., I, 41. In this passage President Strong registers his dissent from the principle of modern Biblical Theology upon precisely the grounds stated above.

[44] Ibid, pp. 241, 242. In the position here stated we find the ground of Professor Warfield's criticism of Denney's "Atonement and the Modern Mind." He charges Denney with Rationalism upon the ground that the latter does not recognize the external or "bare" authority of Scripture. See Princeton Theol. Review, Oct., 1904.

[45] Ibid, p. 242.

spired them to lead every honest inquirer to Christ and to salvation.''[46]

Here, too, we see, as in the case of Hodge and Warfield, that the doctrine of inspiration is conceived as the means of securing the organic unity of the Scriptures as the one authoritative document of revelation. At this point, however, so far as President Strong's definition is concerned, the parallel ceases. Whereas the Princeton theologians hold a doctrine of the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture as the rule of faith and practice, President Strong is content with a doctrine of sufficiency of Scripture for the religious purpose of leading men to Christ and to salvation. ''Inspiration did not guarantee inerrancy in things not essential to the main purpose of Scripture.''[47] Nevertheless, he has a strong theological interest in the doctrine of Inspiration. The Scriptures are sufficient, even for their religious purpose, only when taken together. What this ''togetherness'' of Scripture is appears in the following: ''Yet notwithstanding the ever present human element, the all pervading inspiration of the Scriptures constitutes these various writings an organic whole. Since the Bible is in all its parts the work of God, each part is to be judged not by itself alone, but in its connection with every other part. The Scriptures are not to be interpreted as so many merely human productions by different authors, but as also the work of one divine mind. Seemingly trivial things are to be explained from their connection with the whole. One history is to be built up from the several accounts of the life of Christ. One doctrine must supplement another.''[48] While, therefore, President Strong would not go the full length of the ''inerrancy theory''[49] he does regard the doctrine of Inspiration as fundamental to theological procedure since it guarantees the organic unity of Scripture. It is upon this basis that he rejects modern Biblical Theology in its approach to the literary units of the Bible without any presupposition of their unity.[50] He places the discussion of Inspiration in the forefront of his Theology proper, and in stating the method of determining the divine attributes he says, ''Now that we have proved the Scriptures

[46] Syst. Theol., Vol. I, p. 196.
[47] Ibid, p. 215.
[48] Syst. Theol., I, 217.
[49] Ibid, pp. 218, 229.
[50] Ibid, 41.

to be a revelation from God, inspired in every part, we may properly look to them as decisive authority with regard to God's attributes.'' [51]

Professor Orr's treatment, while seeking to preserve a place for inspiration, certainly diminishes materially its importance as a theological presupposition. All his emphasis is placed upon Revelation as the conception with material content. But while revelation in the order of inquiry, precedes inspiration yet, ''over a large area in the fact itself (What the 'fact itself' is, Orr does not clearly state) revelation and inspiration are *closely* and *inseparably united.* Internal revelation, e. g., such as we have in prophecy, or in the 'revelation of Jesus Christ,' claimed for himself by Paul, is not conceivable save as accompanied by an inspired state of soul. Inspiration is involved in the very reception of such a revelation; is a necessary condition of the revelation being apprehended, possessed, and communicated to others. In the very acknowledgement, therefore, of revelation as an element pervading the Bible and giving unity to its parts, there is implied an acknowledgement of inspiration. Just as, on the other side, there can be no degree of inspiration, however humble, which does not imply some measure of revelation.'' [52] In this passage Professor Orr seems to perform a curious feat of legerdemain. From the *''large area''* over which he says, revelation and inspiration are closely united, he passes like lightning to the *whole area* of the biblical revelation. The ''large area'' is constituted by what he calls internal revelation. Forgetting this restriction he applies the idea of inspiration gained from it to the whole extent of revelation ''pervading the Bible and giving unity to its parts'' without taking account of that revelation which is not internal. This is a *non sequitur,* and Doctor Orr builds upon sandy foundations when he goes on to say that ''Revelation and Inspiration thus go together, and conjointly give to the written word *a quality* which distinguishes it from any product of ordinary human wisdom.''[53] What this quality is which revelation and inspiration conjointly give to the written word, may be inferred from Orr's interpretation of 2Tim. 3:16, namely, that Inspiration confers upon Scripture the property of being profitable for teaching etc.

[51] Ibid, 247.

[52] Revelation and Inspiration, 199, 200.

[53] Ibid, p. 200.

etc.[54] But it is difficult to see upon Professor Orr's presentation of the doctrine of Revelation, what room there is for a doctrine of Inspiration with such content as to affect the form or substance of the record. "Inspiration cannot transcend the existing stage of Revelation; it exists in different degrees according to the nature or character of the person who is its subject; it cannot go behind or supplement or correct its sources of information."[55] Accordingly, Professor Orr is unable to subscribe to the "inerrancy theory" as held by Hodge and Warfield. He does not favor us with an explicit definition of the inspiration of Scripture but leaves us to infer one from a statement of the result in the following characteristic form. "The Bible, *impartially interpreted* and *judged,* is free from *demonstrable* error in its statements, and harmonious in its teachings, *to a degree* that of itself creates an irresistible impression of a supernatural factor in its origin."[56] We must conclude from Professor Orr's whole discussion that the doctrine of inspiration is not one that can have any appreciable effect upon his use of the Scriptures in theology. For this his conception of Revelation is regulative, and revelation is grounded upon the logical and teleological character of the ideas and the history in their mutual involution. Logical consistency and teleological reference are held to guarantee historical reality and substantial accuracy, and the history is primarily the revelation.

With Professor Denney we reach the minimum of emphasis upon the inspiration of Scripture as a theological doctrine. The inspiration of the Bible is held to be its power of moral and spiritual appeal. This power is again identified with the fundamental unity of the Bible which is apprehended only in the light of the doctrine constituting the focal point and religious substance of the whole Christian revelation, namely, the doctrine of Atonement. Thus the doctrine of Inspiration is merely the explanation of the exceptional value which Christian experience finds to attach to the central Christian truth.[57]

Clearly, nothing in Denney's theology depends upon the doctrine of Inspiration. All the substantial realities and values are

[54] Ibid, p. 161.
[55] Ibid, pp. 175-181.
[56] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 215.
[57] Death of Christ, pp. 314-317.

found by and through experience, and the lines of theological construction are determined prior to any verdict upon Scripture either as an organic unity or as inspired. Indeed, the discovery of the organic unity is a prerequisite to the verdict of inspiration.[58]

Professor Olin Curtis who is so closely akin to Denney in his conception of the dogmatic center of the Bible, but who, on the other hand agrees so strikingly with Orr in regarding revelation as primarily a continuous, coherent historical redemptive process, carefully distinguishes between the question of the authority of the Bible and that of its inspiration. The former is grounded in the cogency of its moral and spiritual appeal to men, while the latter is simply the explanation of the power and peculiarity of the book which actually is authority.[59]

That in which all three of these theologians agree, is the fact that any view of inspiration is to be derived from the prior notion of revelation itself self-attesting. The doctrine of inspiration is purely formal and derivative. It can lay no claim to govern theological procedure, and can contribute nothing to theological content. We are reminded how far orthodox theology has traveled when we compare the positions of Orr, Curtis and Denney with that expressed by Doctor Charles Hodge where he says, "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are, therefore, infallible, and of divine authority in all things pertaining to faith and practice, and consequently free from all error whether of doctrine, fact, or precept."[60]

[58] Death of Christ, p. 314.

[59] The Christian Faith, pp. 171-176.

[60] Systematic Theol., I, 152.

CHAPTER III

THE THEOLOGICAL USE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

We have seen in the preceding chapter that all the theologians of our school maintain in some sort a unity of the Scripture whole. To some this unity consists primarily in a system of truth revealed as such by God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To others the unity is found primarily in a connected series of redemptive acts of God through a long historical process and in pursuance of an eternal purpose.

In all periods it has been true that the theological use of the Scriptures has been determined by the views held respecting Scripture itself. That is to say the doctrine *of* Scripture, has determined the doctrine found *in* Scripture. The exegetical process has been controlled by religious and theological presuppositions under which the Scriptures have been approached.[1] It is immediately evident that this fact would not be one to lament, if only there could be approximate certainty that the presuppositions were themselves in accord with fact and truth. But if such is not the case, then interpretation and theological construction will be only exercises in error. We are to inquire, in the present chapter, what influence their doctrine of Scripture has had upon the interpretation and theological architecture of our several theologians. We are to test the worth of their doctrine by the character of the results we see flowing from its application to the biblical material. In so doing we may follow, in general, the same order of investigation as hitherto, in this treatise.

Beginning, then, with the theology of Doctor Charles Hodge, we would first remark that one who proposes to make the Bible the exclusive source and norm of his theological system is under primary obligation to derive his doctrine of Scripture from the Scriptures themselves. If he dictates a doctrine of Scripture to the Bible and then interprets it in accord with the doctrine, he is according to the Bible no real authority, but is imposing upon it his own. Let us note, then, to what extent Doctor Hodge's doctrine of Scripture is Scriptural. First of all he begins with an analogy between nature and the Bible as the repositories of the facts with which Science and Theology respectively deal. Certainly there is nowhere in Scripture

[1] Cf. Immer.—Hermeneutics, p. 11.

any statement warranting such an analogy, while upon grounds of fact and logic no such illustration can hold. In nature the facts are such as can be repeatedly observed and experimentally verified in a total context of unquestionable relationships. But in the Scriptures we have only a fragmentary collection of literary documents diverse in character, reporting human experiences, and ideas under particular local and temporary conditions that can never be restored. Here the method of observation and experiment is out of the question. Only the theological presupposition that the Bible is the document of a static, unchanging revelation of doctrinal truth, permits the use of such an analogy. Moreover, to maintain the analogy with any degree of strictness it would be necessary to suppose in natural science an unchanging nucleus of scientific doctrine so extensive and authoritative as to control the interpretation of all the facts subsequently discovered. We know that Science has in her history absolutely changed front, and to maintain his analogy Doctor Hodge would have to admit the possibility of theology doing likewise, which of course he would not do. He has said that, "The Bible is no more a system of theology than nature is a system of Chemistry or Mechanics."[2] Is it not evident, upon the contrary, that in giving us "portions of a system,"[3] sufficiently clear and complete to serve as a guide and authority in further construction, the Bible gives us the practical equivalent of a whole system?

We notice next the manner in which our theologian seeks to ground the authority of Scripture in the teaching of Scripture itself. The authority and infallibility of the Scriptures are involved in its character as the Word of God, and it has this character by virtue of its inspiration in such sense that what the biblical writers say, God says.[4] The nature and extent of the inspiration of Scripture he, indeed, asserts are to be learned from the didactic statements and phenomena of the Scriptures themselves,[5] but, whereas all these statements and phenomena have reference to particular men speaking upon specific occasions, or to limited portions of the Scripture whole, they are applied to the writing of the entire

[2] Syst. Theol., I, p. 1.

[3] Ibid, p. 3.

[4] Syst. Theol., I, pp. 153, 154.

[5] Ibid, p. 153.

literature. This would be impossible were not the assumption of unity contained in the phrase "Word of God" always present in the theologian's mind. Manifestly the presupposition of any doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture as a whole professed to be derived from the statements and phenomena of Scripture, is always just the conception of the Bible as an organic unity of revelation in such sense as to constitute it "The Word of God." Without this presupposition no careful and unbiased examination of the actual facts would yield such doctrine of inspiration of the Scripture whole. In no passage of the Bible is the Bible as a whole designated in any way. In no Old Testament passage is there a reference to the Old Testament whole, since this whole did not exist even when its latest documents were written. The New Testament, indeed, refers to the whole Old Testament literature in various ways, e. g., the Scriptures, the Holy Scriptures, the Sacred Writings, but they are not called the "Word of God" or any other title justifying the dogma contained in that formula. Professor Orr is in error when he says that "Paul names them (the Old Testament Writings) 'the oracles of God.' "[6] This phrase refers to the Law and not the entire body of Old Testament writings. The question of the New Testament canon, without the determination of which our author's whole position would be meaningless, does not once come within the purview of Scripture. He is compelled to establish the authority of the Old Testament canon by the utterances of the New, and then by a process of inference to establish that of the New.[7] The argument is plainly circular and invalid. It runs as follows: Jesus and His apostles recognized the Jewish canon and quoted from the Old Testament writings as of full divine authority. But if the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament are recognized, upon the authority of Jesus and the apostles much more should those of the New be recognized, since they were produced under the dispensation of the Spirit. Jesus promised the apostles the Holy Spirit who should "bring all things to their remembrance and render them infallible in teaching." This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, from which time they "were new men, with new views, with new spirit, and with new power and authority" . . . . . Their Jewish prejudices had resisted all the instructions and in-

[6] Rom. 3:2.

[7] Cf. admission by Mead, Sup. Rev., p. 304.

fluence of Christ for three years, but gave way in a moment when the Spirit came upon them from on high.[8] After this the apostles "claimed to be the infallible organs of God in all their teachings . . . . ." Of all these statements and interpretations it is to be said that if they were true to fact, still they would not reach to the intended goal of the argument, for the simple reason that statements made primarily with reference to the oral proclamation of religious messages, or to definite and limited written productions cannot be applied to a whole literature or even to documents not embraced by the immediate reference.[9]

It may be added here that in accordance with the criterion our author applies to the determination of the New Testament canon, we should have to eliminate several of the books now included therein. The evidence for apostolic authorship or sanction would in several cases be extra-biblical and quite inconclusive.[10]

The foregoing remarks will apply to the manner in which Professors Hodge, Warfield, Orr and President Strong use the Scriptures in building up their doctrine of Scripture, so that we need not review them in severalty.

As for the manner in which these theologians adduce the testimony of Jesus to support the strict view of the unitary character and indefectible authority of the Old Testament whereby it "is constituted in every passage and declaration the final arbiter of belief and practice,"[11] one cannot feel that account has been taken of all the facts. Even Professor Orr, in spite of many qualifications and concessions can range Jesus upon the side of the strict Rabbinical party as regards the nice questions concerning the canon, and the mint, anise and cummin of scribal legalism.[12] Jesus' attitude toward the Law is not nearly so easy to determine as these writers assume. The case is much more justly stated by a sympathetic and fair-minded Jewish scholar in a recent volume. "He (Jesus) had

[8] Syst. Theol., I, 160 f.

[9] This is illustrated in all the passages cited by Hodge, pp. 157-162. Likewise those used by Orr, Op. cit., pp. 193-194.

[10] The results that appear from a careful induction of Scripture claims regarding its own inspiration are set forth by Professor G. B. Smith in the *Bib. World,* Vol 36, pp. 160ff.

[11] Warfield, Dict. of Christ and the Gospels, Vol. ii, p. 586, Col. 2.

[12] Revelation and Insp., pp. 181, 184, 182.

adopted a prophetic attitude toward the Law. The inward rather than the outward; love rather than sacrifice; this was his position. Whether he had formulated any more theoretic point of view may well be doubted. Thus we find in the gospels exaggerations of both kinds. 'Not one jot or tittle shall ever pass away till all is fulfilled.' On the other hand we find the conception that at least one Mosaic ordinance was given to the Israelites because of the hardness of their hearts. We find a theory announced that Jesus came to complete the Law, not to destroy it, but this completion in regard to such an important element of the Law as the dietary injunctions comes upon occasion to something not remotely resembling abrogation. Here in each case the question as to historical accuracy needs careful weighing. Have the reporters exaggerated the hostility of Jesus to the Law, have they exaggerated his esteem for it? Have they, rather than he, formulated his theoretic attitude toward it?'' [13]

Professor Orr tries to surmount this apparent conflict between Jesus' endorsement and his criticism of the Law by the theory of a progressive revelation or germinal development. ''He fulfilled, but in fulfilling, necessarily superseded and abolished much in the legal economy. The precepts of the law received a deeper and fuller interpretation and expression, in agreement always, however, with the law's own underlying principles.'' [14] But how are we to regard the *supersession* and *abolition* of legal precepts as deeper and fuller interpretations of them?[15]

We come now to the examination of the doctrinal content of the several systems under consideration. Here, of course, the limits of this inquiry forbid exhaustive treatment. At best we can hope only to present such instances of the theological use of Scripture as shall be conclusive for the prevailing attitude of these theologians. We shall select what seem to be dominant theological interests and note how these are derived from, or supported by the Scriptures, if indeed, they are so derived and supported. Otherwise we should be able to see their real sources and sanctions.

[13] C. G. Montefiore, Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, p. xcii.

[14] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 184.

[15] Cf. Mead, Supernatural Revelation, p. 344. "The Mosaic law was in some particulars, not merely defective in the sense of being germinal or prophetic, but defective in the sense of requiring amendment or abolition."

At the beginning of his treatment of the doctrine of God, Doctor Charles Hodge places the famous Westminster definition as expressing the "Christian sense" of the word God. "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice and truth." The definition states the class of beings to which God is to be referred, and by being is meant substance or essence. God is, therefore, in his nature a substance, or essence which is infinite, eternal, etc. Following his first rule of interpretation[16] namely, that words are to be understood in their historical sense, our author proposes to discover the *usus loquendi* of the Hebrew and Greek words translated by the word "Spirit." Thus we will learn, he thinks, what our Lord meant when he said "God is a Spirit." This rather large inquiry in biblical lexicography he dismisses in three lines as follows—"Originally the words רוּחַ and πνεῦμα meant the moving air, especially the breath, as in the phrase πνεῦμα βίου; then any invisible power; then the human soul. In saying, therefore, that God is a Spirit, our Lord authorizes us to believe that whatever is essential to the idea of a Spirit, as learned from our own consciousness, is to be referred to God as determining his nature." Accordingly, our theologian proceeds to set forth the content of human self-consciousness in the introspective manner of the psychology of his day. This content he then imports into the idea of God and defines Him as a simple, immaterial essence, or substance, personal and moral. He concludes with the naïve remark, "It need hardly be said that the Scriptures everywhere represent God as possessing all the above attributes of a Spirit."[16]

Note, now, what Doctor Hodge has actually done. (1) He has ignored the fact that the meaning of the words translated "Spirit" has varied in different periods, and that as applied to both God and man they have expressed varying shades of meaning. His first rule of interpretation should have bound him to a careful examination of the words in the usage of the great periods of biblical history and literature. "The sacred writings being the words of God to man, we are bound to take them in the sense in which those to whom they were originally addressed must inevitably have taken them."[17] Under this principle our author was not at liberty to take some special meaning of a biblical word and then to read that

[16] Op. cit., I, p. 187; also p. 377.

[17] Syst. Theol., I, 377.

meaning into all instances of its use as applied to God. (2) Doctor Hodge has availed himself of the presence of the indefinite article (which of course is not in the original) to give John 4:24 an individual, psychological turn which was not in the mind of the writer. The argument lies, in Doctor Hodge's mind as follows. Man *is a* Spirit, God *is a* Spirit. Hence a psychological analysis of an individual human consciousness will yield a knowledge of the essential nature of God. But this was not the circle of ideas in which the mind of the writer of the Fourth Gospel moved. His thought is a composite of Old Testament, or Hebraic ideas, and of Greek speculation.[18] But neither his Old Testament ideas, nor his Greek speculative concepts would admit the psychological content Doctor Hodge imports into the word πνεῦμα as used in this passage. Both God and man are said to have a spirit, but there is no philosophical doctrine of the essential being of God as Spirit, in the Old Testament, at least.[19] Accordingly, Doctor Hodge's use of this text involves a threefold perversity. (a) He misses the writer's meaning. (b) He developes this inaccurate psychological interpretation into a metaphysical conception and (c) he reads this metaphysical conception into the purely ethical and practical theism of that most unmetaphysical literature —the Old Testament. Summarizing what has been said, Doctor Hodge in this particular case (a) has violated his whole doctrine of Scripture as the sole source of the facts with which theology must deal, by introducing materials from Eighteenth century psychology, and Medieval philosophy; (b) he has been untrue to his inductive method, and (c) has violated his first rule of interpretation. He has done these things because he starts out with a certain philosophical view of the nature of God which he is obligated to hold as the true and Christian view; and because he holds the Old Protestant view of the Bible as the "Word of God," and, therefore as expressing an organic unity of revelation. It must, in all its parts, present the same conception of the divine nature.

The foregoing illustrates Doctor Hodge's practice throughout, and there is scarcely a division in his theology in which a similar showing might not be made. When he has established his doctrine of the nature of God by the psychological method, of course he must de-

[18] Cf. E. F. Scott, The Fourth Gospel, Its Purpose and Theology, p. 334.

[19] See A. B. Davidson, Hast. Bib. Dict., Vol. II, p. 197; Schultz, O. T. Theology, Vol. II, p. 111.

termine His attributes by the same method, and this he actually does. The breadth of his use of Scripture may be illustrated by the fact that in the development of his Theism he cites eighty-four passages in proof-text style from twenty-seven books—fifteen Old Testament books and twelve New Testament books. Of the New Testament quotations, thirty-two in all, twelve are from Pauline writings, and a bare half dozen are from the gospels. Of those from the gospels, four are from Matthew and two from John, as follows, Mat. 10:30; 27:43; 19:26; 20:15. Jno. 3:16; 4:24. The first of these, a poetic expression in the midst of a teaching concerning trust, is used to support the doctrine of divine omniscience. The second is used to illustrate a use of the word "will" in the sense of complacency (delighting in) with a view to maintaining that where the Scripture speaks of willing all men to be saved it does not express purpose. The words are not from Jesus but from his persecutors. To use the text as he does our author would seem to be obligated to maintain the inspiration of the crucifiers of our Lord. The third is used to support the doctrine of omnipotence—"God can do whatever he wills without means and without effort." Mat. 20:15 is used to illustrate the Sovereignty of God in the Calvinistic sense, whereas if the whole parable be expounded in its evident intention it teaches quite the reverse conception of God. Jno. 3:16 is cited as proving that the great end of redemption was the manifestation of God's love, for his own glory. No such meaning can be extracted from it, unless first put into it.

One must wonder how Doctor Hodge could have regarded this as a sufficient induction of Scripture facts. It results from his whole procedure that practically nothing is drawn from the personal revelation in the teaching and life of Jesus upon the very theme and central religious reality of Christianity, namely the knowledge of the Father. By his psychological method and in fulfillment of his confessional obligations Doctor Hodge has displaced and nullified the testimony of the supreme organ of God's self-disclosure.

It is proposed to examine Warfield's practice chiefly in connection with his present lively interest in Christology. Though he is an able defender of the Westminster theology as a whole, the final issues of the theological battle seem to him to be drawn at the point of the doctrine of Incarnation and specifically that view of the doctrine represented by the Chalcedonian symbol. Of course, he comes to the defense of the Chalcedonian Christology from that

side of the question which, historically has ever been the dominant concern of the Church, namely the Deity of Christ. A study of his theological use of Scripture, may, then, be begun by noting the spirit, method and result of his exegesis in his volume entitled "The Lord of Glory" (New York 1907). He frankly states at the outset the doctrinal interest in which he approaches his task. "We are entering, then," he says, "in part upon an exposition, in part upon an argument. We wish to learn, so far as the designations applied to our Lord in the New Testament are fitted to reveal that to us, how the writers of the New Testament were accustomed to think of Jesus; we wish to show that they thought of Him above everything else as a Divine Person . . . . . In prosecuting our exposition we shall seek to run cursorily through the entire New Testament; in framing our argument we shall lay primary stress on the Gospels, or rather on the Synoptic Gospels, and adduce the remaining books as chiefly corroborative and elucidative to what we shall find in the evangelical narratives. Thus we hope to take at once a wide or even complete view of the whole field, and to throw into prominence the *unitary presupposition by the entire New Testament of the deity of our Lord*" (italics mine)[20]

To most students it would seem a somewhat perilous undertaking to carry two such interests—that of the exegete and of the apologete—in the close connection here indicated, and to require an extraordinary measure of poise and self-control, not attained by many, to prevent the apologetic interest from encroaching upon the expository. Especially would it seem perilous in such a case as the present one, where the expositor betrays so plainly as does Warfield in the last sentence quoted, that his final result is in hand before the process of exposition begins. Still one might prejudge his case without frankly stating it, and Warfield may be perfectly unbiased in his exegesis notwithstanding his preconception that the entire New Testament presupposes the deity of our Lord. Whether he is so or not will appear upon a critical examination of his procedure as regards certain critical passages.

We note, first of all, his exposition of Mat. 11:27=Luke 10:22, Mat. 28:19, and Mk. 13:32=Mat. 24:36. Concerning the latter, Warfield says (1) that Jesus here "asserts for himself not merely a superhuman but even a superangelic rank in the scale of being",

[20] The Lord of Glory, pp. 2, 3.

(2) that "He separates himself from the angels in heaven (note the enhancing definition of locality, carrying with it the sense of the exaltation of these angels above all that is earthly) as belonging to a different class from them, and that a superior class." (3) that Jesus "the Son" stands as definitely and as incomparably above the category of angels, the highest of God's creatures, as to the author of the epistle of the Hebrews, whose argument may be taken as a commentary upon this pasage (Heb. 1:4-2:8). Concerning all this it is to be said (1) that Warfield misses the point of the passage. Nothing is said about "rank in the scale of being," the subject is "degrees of knowledge." A difference in degree of knowledge does not necessarily involve difference in grade of being.[21] (2) If the passage establishes the superangelic uncreated being of Jesus, it also establishes his infra-deistic being. There is as strong an element of subordination to the father as there is of elevation above the angels. This however, Warfield would not wish to admit as it would conflict with his Trinitarianism.

Of Mat. 28:19 our author gives the following exposition. The Son is "made openly a sharer with the Father (and with the Holy Spirit) in the single name of God," "Jesus here asserts a place for himself in the precincts of the ineffable Name. Here is a claim not merely to a deity in some sense equivalent to and, as it were, alongside of the deity of the Father, but to a deity in some high sense, one with the deity of the Father" [22] "The significant point of this passage is the singular 'Name.' It does not read, 'Into the Names' as of many but of one,[23]—'Into the Name' of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Father, the Son and the Spirit are therefore in some ineffable sense one, sharers in the single name. Of course it is what we know as the Christian doctrine of the Trinity which is suggested here." [24] It would be impossible, of course, for any theologian except one holding some such high theory of verbal inspiration as Warfield does, to lay such emphasis upon a single point as he places upon the use of the singular τὸ ὄνομα instead of the plural τὰ ὀνόματα. But aside from the theory

[21] Upon this text, Weiss. Bib. Theol. of the N. T., p. 39, Vol. I.

[22] Op. cit., p. 83.

[23] This sounds like an echo of Gal. 3:16.

[24] Ibid, p. 95. Similar and even stronger expressions in allusion to this passage may be found pp. 140, 156.

and in the absence of dogmatic demands the text itself does not yield any such interpretation. Meyer comments as follows: "The singular (τὸ ὄνομα) points to the specific names assigned in the text to each of the three respectively, so that εἷς τὸ ὄνομα is, of course, to be understood both before τοῦ υἱοῦ and τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος . . . . . We must beware of making any such dogmatic use of the singular as to employ it as an argument either for or against the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity." Jesus "was never known to claim the name θεὸς either for himself or for the Holy Spirit."[25]

Warfield's chief reliance, however, for the establishment of the metaphysical sonship of Jesus, is upon the passages Matt. 11:27 =Luke 10:22. Here, it is said, "our Lord asserts for himself a relation of practical equality with God," "not merely is the son the exclusive revealer of God, but the mutual knowledge of Father and Son is put on what seems very much a par. The Son can be known only by the Father in all that he is, as if His being were infinite and as such inscrutable to the finite intelligence; and his knowledge alone—again as if He were infinite in His attributes—is competent to compass the depths of the Father's being."[26] In Luke "it is said, not that the 'Father' and 'Son' know each other but that each know what the other is, that is to say, all that each is. It would be difficult to frame a statement which could more sharply assert the essential deity of the Son."[27] "The assertion of the reciprocal knowledge of the Father and the Son . . . . . rises far above the merely mediatorial function of the Son . . . . . ; it carries us back into the region of metaphysical realities."[28] "Jesus' mediatorial function is rooted in a metaphysical relation in which is suggested no hint of subordination."[29]

Here again Warfield's dogmatic bias and his theory of Scripture lead him off into verbal and scholastic refinements that have no basis in the passage considered in its logical sense. A little impartial attention will impress the following points. (1) The present tense (ἐπιγινώσκει) upon which Warfield lays much stress is to be con-

[25] Com. on Matthew, Eng. Tr., Vol. II, p. 30.

[26] Op. cit., pp. 82, 83.

[27] Ibid, p. 119.

[28] Ibid, p. 93. To such statements regarding these passages Warfield frequently returns throughout his volume.

[29] Op. cit., p. 94.

sidered relatively to the preceding aorist (παρεδόθη). It is only after the delivering that the knowing is to be assumed. The fact that all things had to be delivered would bear against the eternal knowing of the Father by the Son. A distinct element of subordination is present.[30] (2) The knowledge of the Father by the Son which the Son is said to have is such as can be revealed to others, and cannot therefore be that metaphysical knowledge of the Father's essence to which Warfield refers. "All that God is," within his meaning, would be essentially incommunicable to finite creatures.[31] (3) The "all things" (πάντα) which our author interprets to mean "all that God has," "all that is peculiar to himself" (Hahn, endorsed by Warfield) is rather to be understood of the messianic prerogatives of Jesus and of the ethical elements of his historical disclosure of God—a revelation which was possible even to finite intelligencies.[32] Biblical study is rapidly tending toward a view of these passages which denies their affinity with the high Christology of the Fourth Gospel.[33]

We may now refer to a more recent production of Warfield's pen, namely his series of articles upon "The Two Natures and Recent Christological Speculation," American Journal of Theology, Vol. 15. He claims that, while the δύο οὐσίαι may first appear in extant writings in a fragment of Melito's of Sardis, the "thing" goes back to the beginning.[34] "The doctrine of the 'Two Natures' is but another way of stating the doctrine of the Incarnation." "No Two Natures, no Incarnation; no Incarnation, no Christianity in any distinctive sense."[35] "The Chalcedonian Christology is only

[30] Compare Denney, Jesus and the Gospels, pp. 238, 239.

[31] As Professor Warfield himself suggests, p. 83.

[32] So B. Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, Vol. I, p. 78, text and footnote. With this interpretation Professor Denney (Jesus and the Gospels, pp. 236-246) is in essential agreement. The difference between Professors Warfield and Denney may be summed up by means of a parallel. Warfield's Christology includes the following points: Co-ordination (equality), Identification (deity), Metaphysical relation. Denny's are: Subordination, Correlation (uniqueness, making Jesus religiously determinative), Ethical, and Vital relation (not denying the metaphysical relationship, but declining to assert it as essential or specially helpful.)

[33] Cf. E. F. Scott: Theology of the Fourth Gospel, pp. 189 ff. Schmiedel, Das vierte Evangelium, 48 ff.

[34] Vide p. 340.

[35] Ibid, p. 337.

a very perfect synthesis of the biblical data . . . . . It takes its starting point from the New Testament as a whole, thoroughly trusted in all its declarations, and seeks to find a comprehensive statement of the scriptural doctrine of Christ's person which will do justice to all the elements of its representation.''[36] This Chalcedonian definition brings together and harmonizes all the biblical data, proving thus to be the key that ''unlocks the treasures of biblical instruction on the person of Christ as none other can, and enables the reader as he currently scans the sacred pages to take up their declarations as they meet him, one after the other, into an intelligently consistent conception of our Lord.''[37]

These affirmations Warfield proceeds to establish from Scripture. And what is the nature and extent of his proof? The exact title of his first article is ''The Christology of the New Testament Writings'' and we are entitled to expect a fair induction of the materials of the whole New Testament literature. But as a matter of fact we are treated to a highly *doctrinaire* exposition of three Pauline texts, viz., Rom. 9:5, Phil. 2:6, Col 2:9, and to a defense of the theory that the designation κύριος applied to Jesus by Paul (and the whole primitive Christian community) is equivalent in meaning to θεὸς. Only a single saying of Jesus is cited with reference to a doctrine said to be the ''hinge on which the Christian system turns.''

It is neither necessary nor possible in this discussion to deal *in extenso* with Warfield's exposition of the above-mentioned texts. He simply assumes that controversy has terminated with reference to these admittedly difficult passages, in favor of the use he wishes to make of them—an assumption contrary to the facts. He lightly dismisses the question of text-corruption in Romans 9:5, as also that of the doxological nature of the passage or of its proper punctuation.

In bringing Phil. 2:6 to the support of his interpretation of Rom. 9:5, our exegete is singularly inattentive to the context

[36] Ibid, p. 341.

[37] Ibid, p. 343. Professor Denney speaks of the Westminster statement of the doctrine of the Two Natures as one that may once have seemed to help intelligence but which can now at the very utmost do no more than guard against error—an arbitrary definition of God-manhood. He would class it along with the technicalities foreign to the New Testament. Cf. Studies in Theology, pp. 69-70. One is curious to know how any statement which does not help intelligence can possibly guard against error.

and gives his readers scarcely any intimation of the strength of an opposing view maintained by many scholars of first rank.[38] It is by no means certain that Christ Jesus is here "asserted to be 'on an equality with God' " nor is it certain that the representation of Christ Jesus as ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is precisely to call him God.[39] Attention to the preceding context shows that the writer is contemplating a practical situation possible or actual in which there is faction and vain glory, and in connection with which is always found the effort to grasp at something not possessed but assumed to be a privilege or prerogative rightfully belonging to the individual or party seeking it. It is with a view to the correcting of this positive, active, pushing spirit that Paul adduces the example of Jesus who, instead of aspiring to something above him though he might, seeing he was *in the sphere of* the divine, have easily considered the being *on an equality with* God as a thing to which he was entitled, yet, as a matter of fact *gave up what he already possessed* (existence in the form of God) and accepted something much lower, namely existence in the form of a servant, by entering the conditions of human life; still further, in this lower form he still manifested the same self-abnegating quality by becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The whole point and force of the argument is seen in what Jesus Christ did actually do in contrast with what he might have done. The other interpretation does not fit the practical purpose nearly so well.[40]

With reference also to Warfield's treatment of Col. 2:19, it must be said that he does not weigh opposing interpretations. He applies words spoken of the exalted, glorified, personal Redeemer, to the preëxistent Christ defined as the impersonal divine Logos. That is to say, our author seems determined to make of the Hebrew-Christian thinker, an Alexandrine philosopher.[41]

As for the contention that the equation κύριος=יהוה (θεός) may be legitimately written, it is difficult to understand Professor Warfield's confidence in view of the careful studies of Case and Bacon.[42]

[38] e. g. B. Weiss, Pfleiderer, Schmidt.

[39] Ibid, p. 348.

[40] Cf. B. Weiss, Th. N. T., Vol. ii, pp. 100-101.

[41] Cf. T. K. Abbott. Int. Crit. Com. in loc. Also B. Weiss, B. Th. of the N. T., Vol. ii, 103-104.

[42] Shirley J. Case. The Journal of Biblical Literature, 1907. pp. 151-161. The term κύριος is a title of relation and connotes the unique authority of the

We can understand this procedure as that of a dogmatician and apologete, but not as that of an exegete. Starting out, as he does, with the assumption that the doctrine of the "Two Natures" is the key to the interpretation of the whole biblical teaching concerning Christ's person, it would be strange if he did not unlock all difficult passages with it.[43] In two or three instances, indeed, in the article mentioned, he frankly terminates the debate by the arbitrary assertion that Paul held the doctrine, (e. g. pp. 347, footnote, 352, 353) which is, of course, the very question in debate.

In concluding our examination of Warfield's usage of the Scriptures, we may profitably glance into one of his recent polemic articles. We have seen how much he can make of scripture passages in support of a doctrine he wishes to maintain. We shall now see how little he can make of them when they are used to support a practice distasteful to him and contrary to the custom of his religious communion. In the Methodist Quarterly Review, Oct. 1911, he argues against the claim that the New Testament supports any particular view as to the mode of Christian baptism.[44]

"No doubt all perplexity would be at an end if the New Testament prescribed a mode of baptism. But so would be at an end that evangelical freedom for which Christ has set us free. We should so far be entangled again in a joke of bondage and who knows how little leaven it would take to leaven the whole lump."

"To say that the New Testament does not prescribe a mode of baptism is much to understate the matter. It does not even suggest one mode as preferable perhaps to another. It does not so describe any instance of baptism as to show interest in how it was performed, or tempt us to look upon it as an example having normative value

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exalted Jesus over his people. It conveys no metaphysical meaning and is not the equivalent of יהוה or θεός. B. W. Bacon, Harvard Theological Review, April 1, 1911.

[43] Concerning the logical and psychological difficulties involved in the doctrine of the Two Natures—and Warfield admits that the mystery is very deep—(compare Am. Jrnl. of Theol., Oct. 1911, p. 564) it is not the place of this inquiry to treat. A recent writer has maintained that upon Warfield's presentation it is not merely a mystery but a contradiction. E. A. Cook, American J. of T., Apr. 1912, pp. 268-275.

[44] The entire Article embraces pp. 641-660 and should be read in connection with this discussion.

. . . . . and he who affirms of any particular way of baptizing that it, and it alone, is valid baptism, has an immense burden of proof resting on his shoulders. He can produce no justification of his affirmation from the New Testament in the way of either express assertion or authoritative example, or unambiguous implication. And is it not a sound Protestant principle that only the Holy Spirit, speaking in the Scriptures has the right authoritatively to order the things of the house of God."

Now, if Warfield were arguing on behalf of some doctrine he wished to defend, and the Scriptures permitted it, his first appeal would be to lexicography. His confidence in the very words of Scripture would lead him to press philological details. Not so in the present instance. He talks of modes of baptism, of one mode as preferable to another, ignoring the possibility that the very word rendered baptism might have been so unambiguous as to have settled the distinctive point of the action contemplated. It seems not to occur to him that a description of "any instance of baptism" was, perhaps, rendered superfluous by the very connotation of the term. If there were *modes* of baptism we might expect some indication of the fact in the New Testament, but if baptism was a perfectly definite action, we should expect just what we have, namely, no raising of the question. When Warfield affirms that the New Testament indicates no preference for one mode of baptism over another or supports no claim for the exclusive validity of one mode as against others he is perfectly correct. The New Testament is wholly silent upon the whole burning question of the baptismal controversy, for the reason that the fuel for it was not yet prepared or ignited. But if he maintains that the New Testament affords no clear and decisive indication as to what the action of baptism was in the primitive Christian community, he takes issue with the vast majority of New Testament scholars.

Before passing to his exegesis of the scripture texts usually held to support immersion, we may advert to Warfield's anti-legalism. Does he not betray his essential legalism in admitting that *if* the New Testament prescribed a mode or gave clear and unambiguous examples, we would, as Christians, be compelled to follow that mode? Are not those thinkers less legalistic who, while admitting that the New Testament clearly indicates only immersion as the external act of baptism, yet maintain that there are deeper principles clearly

taught in the New Testament absolving us from slavish dependence upon forms due to local and temporal conditions?

At the very beginning, Warfield sets aside all the references to baptism in the gospels, except that of Mat. 28:19-20, upon the grounds that they refer to the baptism of John, or to Jewish lustrations, or are used metaphorically. Even outside the gospels, his exclusion leaves comparatively few references to Christian baptism. In this exclusion our author betrays his fatal weakness as an exegete. He proposes to ignore the bearing of the very history out of which Christian practice arises, and he seems to overlook the fact that metaphors might conceivably have very definite reference to Christian baptism as, in some cases, most commentators would agree is the fact.

Warfield's treatment of Mat. 28:19-20 is very instructive for our purpose. It will be remembered how exceedingly detailed, almost to the point of Rabbinism, was his exposition of the text when he was using it for the purposes of his Christology and Trinitarianism. Now notice how he minimizes it in relation to baptism, something in which he has no dogmatic interest and against the importance of which he is arguing. "There is but one mention of the Christian rite in the Gospels, namely Mat. 28:19, in which the risen Lord sends forth his followers to make disciples of all nations, *incidentally* adding that the disciples *when made,* were to be baptized and instructed." (italics mine). But if βαπτίζοντες κ. τ. λ. was added as a mere incidental to the command to make disciples, and essentially to complete their making, then the words following and depending upon βαπτίζοντες are also incidental, and the tremendous baptismal formula with its singular το ὄνομα upon which Professor Warfield lays such emphasis appears as an afterthought. If Doctor Warfield wishes to maintain the integrity of the text as it stands, and if he is true to his theory of Inspiration in its bearing upon interpretation, he cannot deal with it so capriciously as he does.[45]

[45] Especially instructive in this connection is Professor Warfield's statement that "the inspiration of the Scripture is true and being true is fundamental to the adequate interpretation of Scripture." Pres. Review, Apr. 1881, p. 227. In a personal letter to the writer and replying to the question as to just how the doctrine of inspiration is related to interpretation, Professor Warfield says that "confidence in the details of the text before him necessarily affects the work of the interpreter. An interpreter dealing with a text in which he has little confidence, will not press details, as will one who knows what he has before him to

Meyer, in whose exegesis Warfield seems to place great confidence, (see note below) comments upon the clause under consideration as follows—"βαπτίζοντες κ. τ. λ. in which the μαθητεύειν is to be consummated, *not* something that must be done after the μαθητεύσατε."[46] Of course the present tendency of textual criticism is toward regarding the clause in question as incidental in a far more serious sense than Warfield means, but it is not supposable that this has affected his confidence in the text with reference to βαπτίζοντες any more than it has with reference to τὸ ὄνομα.

One more illustration of Warfield's exegesis must suffice. He argues that in Rom. 6:4 and Col. 2:12 there is no allusion to the manner of baptism. "It is the spiritual experience of one who is in Christ Jesus which is adverted to, and baptism is mentioned only as the outward act by which the union of the soul in the Christ is marked." (p. 649) "Paul is not appealing in it (Rom. 6:3-4) to the symbolism of the external rite: so far from implying that the symbolism of the external rite was burial and resurrection with Christ, he clearly betrays that he knew of no such symbolism in it." (p. 651) "It is only by formally establishing a connection between baptism and the death of Christ, that Paul establishes a connection between baptism and burial with Christ. This he even labors to accomplish. Why should he make all this round about argument to connect our baptism with Christ's burial, if baptism in its very mode of administration was vocal with this connection." (ibid).

Here again Warfield is in conflict with the great weight of exegetical authority. There is practical unanimity of opinion that both in Romans and Colossians the figure does refer to the external rite of baptism, and that its requirements would best be met by immersion.[47] Godet admits that it might be met by a partial submersion—i. e. standing in water to the loins. Aside, however, from exegetical authority, is there not something exceedingly labored about the contention that Paul "labors to accomplish a

be safeguarded in its authority by divine influence . . . . . The minute exegesis, say, of a Westcott, a Lightfoot, or a Meyer presupposes a doctrine of verbal inspiration which requires the interpreter exactly to reproduce the thought embodied in the language."

[46] Com. on Matthew, Eng. Tr., ii, p. 301, 302.

[47] So Meyer, Abbott, Beet, Sanday, Headlam, Plummer.

connection between baptism and burial with Christ," which he does only by "first establishing a connection between baptism and the death of Christ." Attention to the whole passage conveys anything but an unusual effort on Paul's part. In vv. 2 and 3 we have two questions addressed by Paul in characteristic manner to his readers, both evidently presupposing negative answers. If he had been seeking to establish something of which they were really ignorant, he would not have asked if they were ignorant.[48] Immediately after the question, the negative answer having been presupposed, the apostle proceeds to the conclusion. Thus in two short verses we have with almost spontaneous ease, a result which our author says Paul labored to secure. Furthermore, in the Colossian passage there is no semblance of argument. If it was necessary to labor on behalf of the Roman understanding, why was it unnecessary on behalf of the Colossians? In interpreting Rom. 9:5 and Phil. 2:5 in the interest of his Christology we saw how Doctor Warfield brought Col. 2:19 to their support. Why did he not bring Col. 2:12 to the aid of Rom. 6:3-4?

In conclusion we may record the fact that in his Christological constructions, Warfield pays slight regard to the historical environment in relation to which New Testament conceptions were developed. One would scarcely know from his writings, except in quotations from those whom he opposes, that there was such a thing as Jewish Messianism or an Apocalyptic literature. It is a constant practice of the theologians with whom we are dealing to ignore the historical development between the two Testaments, so far as it may be considered to register itself in the New Testament.[49] Of course the reason for this lies in the conception of Scripture as in itself an organic unity of revelation and as such complete and self-interpreting.

[48] Cf. James Denney, The Death of Christ, p. 84. "The apostle was not saying anything of startling originality, when he wrote in the beginning of Rom. vi 'Know ye not that all we who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?' Every Christian knew that in baptism what his mind was directed to, in connection with the blessing of forgiveness, was the death of Christ."

[49] Professor Orr, for example, makes this strange remark, "Apocalypse in Scripture is not to be explained out of current Jewish apocalyptic tendencies; conversely, Jewish Apocalypse is to be explained from the Biblical models." Revelation and Inspiration, footnote, p. 98.

In his "Progress of Dogma" (1901), Professor James Orr declares "that while the scriptures are always to be considered the ultimate test of theological development, yet inasmuch as all systems equally appeal to scripture, there is need of a tribunal to decide upon this appeal. Such tribunal he finds in the history of dogmatic development with its practically consentient body of doctrine in the great church creeds." These creeds represent the "survival of the fittest" in doctrine under the severest possible strain.[50] It is, then, under the guidance of this "verdict of history," that we are to approach the Scripture. "It is easy to speak of appeal to the Scriptures but it is to be remembered that this very application to Scripture cannot be divorced from that growing insight into its plan and purpose—into the organic unity and fundamental harmony of its doctrinal content—which is the result, partly, indeed, of our improved method of using it, but partly also of that very history of dogma which we propose to test by it. We are more dependent on the past than we think even in our interpretation of Scripture; and it would be as futile for any man to attempt to draw his system of doctrine at first hand from Scripture, as it would be for a man of science to draw his scientific knowledge direct from nature, unaided by textbooks, or the laborious researches of the myriad workers in the same field."[51]

In the light of these statements we can understand how Professor Orr discovers the organic unity of the Scriptures—which is constituted by God's progressive self-revelation, which he equates with the gospel, and in which he includes the whole scheme of traditional orthodox theology. (Supra p. 17) He discovers it in the creeds of the church and need not pursue the laborious path of inductive research to discover from the materials of Scripture itself what manner of unity or of diversity it possesses. He forgets that the historic dogmas, so far as they were professedly based upon the Scriptures, were derived by a method of study and exegesis out of all accord with that sanctioned by modern scholarship, and he overlooks the

[50] Op. cit., pp. 14, 18, 19.

[51] Op. cit., p. 15. The position here taken by Professor Orr would seem to be perilously near if not identical with that of Roman Catholicism. The Scriptures are no longer sufficient for doctrine, and the right of private judgment is abrogated by appeal to the history of dogma as "a tribunal before which the personal equation in the individual judgment is cancelled". (p. 17).

even more important fact, that those dogmas were cast in the terminology and thought forms of a philosophy quite remote from the genius of the Hebrew literature to the content of which they were applied. To make these dogmatic formulations, therefore, the instruments of interpretation is to perpetuate the ancient error, and sin against our modern light.

But let us see how Orr's theory functions in the interpretation of scripture. A good illustration of the manner in which his theory of the continuity and coherence of the redemption history recorded in Scripture works over into his theology is found in his identification of the "Angel of Yahwe" in the Old Testament theophanies[52] with the second person of the Trinity. "This angel, in any case, is not an ordinary angel, but stands in a peculiar nearness to Jehovah, represents him, and, as far as words can do it, is identified with him."[53] "The revelation through the Angel . . . . . points to a real distinction in the nature of God such as is associated in the New Testament with the idea of the Logos or Son." "The objection naturally taken to this . . . . . interpretation is that it seems to read back into the early stages of revelation the New Testament doctrine of the Trinity. In reply it may be said that the question is not so much one of doctrine as of the interpretation of historical facts. We cannot, indeed, legitimately read back New Testament ideas into these early narratives, as if the writers possessed, or intended to convey, a developed doctrine of the Trinity. But it is not inadmissible, in interpreting God's earlier revelation, to use any light that comes to us from the later; and if later revelation makes clear to us, as it does, a real self-distinction in God, there exists no reason why we should not avail ourselves of the aid of that truth here. Oehler seems to come very near the essence of the matter when he sums up by saying, that the *Malach* was a self-presentation of Jehovah entering into the sphere of the creature, which is one in essence with Jehovah—and is yet again distinct from him."[54] Upon all this we remark—That the Old Testament writers speak of this "Angel of Jehovah" as they do is not the only

[52] Gen. 16:10-12; 18:13; 18:33; 22:11 ff.; Ex. 23:20, 21, etc.

[53] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 84.

[54] Op. cit., pp. 86, 87. Cf. also "The Christian View of God and the World," p. 305. For a practically identical argument in more extreme form on the same matter, cf. Hodge, Syst. Theol., vol. i, p. 486.

pertinent historical fact our author is bound to consider and interpret. There is the fact of the predominant monotheism of the Old Testament, and of its freedom from any teaching about distinctions in the divine essence. Before permitting himself to help out the interpretation of the Old Testament by means of ideas drawn from the New, it should be explained as far as possible out of its own circle of ideas, and in relation to the total context of the history in which it is vitally implicated. In appealing from the period to which these narratives are assigned to the New Testament era and to a different culture world for interpretative ideas our author destroys the possibility of understanding the real history in which God's revelation is contained. It is really more a question of doctrine than of historic fact. Instead of the historical facts requiring the explanation given, his theory of the unity of biblical revelation requires him to explain the references to the "Angel of Jehovah" by the Logos conception, or the Trinity.[55]

The untenableness of the theory that the Scriptures are to be interpreted by means of the verdict of history registered in the evangelical creeds is seen in the fundamental oppositions that exist between those creeds themselves. Under the guidance of different dogmatic formulae, different arrangements of Scripture appear. This fact is brought out very clearly by Orr himself with reference to a doctrine fundamental to the Augustinian system, namely, that of Eternal Retribution. "What chiefly weighs with many in creating dissatisfaction with the current church view is not so much special texts of Scripture, as rather the general impression produced upon the mind by the whole spirit and scope of the gospel revelation. Starting with the character of God as Christ reveals it; with the fact of the Incarnation; with the reality and breadth of the atonement; with the glimpses given into the issues of Christ's work, the feeling is produced in every thoughtful mind, that the sweep of the great scheme of Incarnation and Redemption cannot be ex-

[55] Cf. Liddon's Bampton Lectures, pp. 49, 52. "There are occult references to this doctrine (the deity of Christ) which we are not likely to detect, unless while seeking them, we are furnished with an exegetical principle such as was that of the organic unity of Scripture as understood by the early church."

The above paragraph in the text is written not to prove Orr's practice inconsistent with his theory, but to illustrate the weakness of the theory. The argument indicates how a pseudo-historical theory of Revelation makes impossible the application of a genuine historical method of interpretation.

hausted in the comparatively meager results which we see springing from it here."[56] But Calvinistic theologians approaching the Scriptures under the guidance of the Westminster Confession do not obtain any such general impression from the whole spirit and scope of the gospel revelation. Hodge, for example, does not start with the character of God as Christ reveals it. The fact of the Incarnation did not mean to him just what it does to Orr. The latter did not derive his view of Incarnation with its results from the Scriptures by the help of any of the historic creeds. Doctor Hodge by the help of the Westminster Confession found in Scripture a scheme of doctrine that required Eternal Retribution more decisively than the general impression of which Orr speaks requires its exclusion.

It is to be noted that Orr here suggests a method of interpretation very different from that which we have heretofore found illustrated, namely, judging *specific statements* in the light of the *general tenor* of the Scripture revelation. According to Hodge and his school, the general tenor of Scripture, viz., our theology, must be so constructed as to make permanent place for all Scripture statements of doctrine. We must infer that Orr means something different, namely that the essential truth of the revelation of God given in Scripture and culminating in Jesus' incarnation and work may be disengaged from temporary and perhaps foreign accretions that have become involved with the revelation. He is, however, very timid in the application of the view he suggests. Even in connection with his discussion of the doctrine of retribution he makes it plain that his working theory is not so free as his suggestion would imply. He really holds in effect that the Bible teaches only what it says in specific statements upon any given subject. The whole spirit and scope of the gospel revelation is not to be urged with regard to any matter upon which the Bible furnishes specific statements for or against.[57]

In conclusion, attention is called to Orr's theological system in which we obtain a general idea of the use of Scripture to which he is committed. As set forth in his Kerr Lectures, Christianity involves a view of God and the world.[58] This view centers in the

[56] CVGW, p. 389.

[57] CVGW, pp. 390-397.

[58] Although in form these lectures are Apologetic yet they are intended by Orr to represent a positive construction of the entire system of Christian doctrine. Cf. pp. 3, 4.

Incarnation which is the determining conception, illuminating and transforming every other doctrine. It involves a definite view of God, of Man, of Sin, Redemption, the purpose of God in Creation and History, and a view of human destiny. Doctor Orr's whole view of Christianity and therefore of the teaching of Scripture will depend upon his conception of the Incarnation. The supreme test of the Scriptural character of his theology will lie in the nature and derivation of his doctrine of the Incarnation. By the Incarnation he understands that Jesus Christ "was not mere man, but the eternal Son of God—a truly Divine Person—who in the fullness of time took upon him our humanity and who, on the ground that in him as man there dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, is to be worshiped and trusted even as God is."[59] The divine character of Jesus Christ is understood by Orr in the strict sense required by the orthodox doctrine of the Ontological Trinity.[60]

Now, the Incarnation, so conceived is said by our author to be the consentient doctrine of the whole New Testament. Let us see how he deals with Scripture to establish this.

(a) In Lecture II he applies his principle, that the history of dogma by showing us what views have survived, establishes for us a principle of Scripture interpretation. He claims to show that lower views of Christ than that taken in the creeds of the church have been untenable.

(b) With this verdict of history he comes to the interpretation of the New Testament literature which he takes up in the following order. First, he inquires what view of Christ's person was held in the apostolic age, as throwing light upon Christ's own claims. Second, he interrogates the Synoptic gospels to learn whether the testimony of the apostles is corroborated by the self-consciousness of Jesus. Needless to say he finds just what the verdict of history led him to expect. The general regard in which Jesus was held from the very first, on the ground of his resurrection and ascension is held to imply that he was no mere man but a supernatural personage. He overlooks the possible alternative that Jesus might have been regarded as a "man approved of God" endowed by God with power to perform wonderful works, raised from the dead and glorified at God's right hand, without the supernatural preëxistent character

[59] Op. cit., pp. 4, 5.
[60] Ibid, pp. 38, 54.

being applied to him. Though Orr admits the early chapters of Acts to "contain little or no dogmatic teaching on the origin or constitution of Christ's person", yet he holds that these undogmatic representations furnish the data or premises from which all the positions of the Christology of the Epistles can be deduced.[61] He makes much of the fact that Jesus is represented as being the Judge of the World. This he thinks implies the supernatural dignity of his person and even involves essentially divine attributes, e. g. Omniscience. A little attention to current Messianic ideas in Apocalyptic literature and even in the New Testament itself would have shown him that the judging function was thought of as a conferred prerogative and one for the exercise of which corresponding powers must also be bestowed.[62] He finds Paul and John to be in perfect accord in their Christology; contemptuously rejects the "Heavenly Man" theory; finds both Paul and the writer of the Hebrew letter assuming that their Christology is that which is current among their readers; and gives the title κύριος a meaning equivalent to essential deity.

Coming next to the Synoptic gospels he finds the claims of Christ, his works and his character all to bear out the view contained in the other New Testament literature and states the resultant doctrine of the Incarnation which alone meets the New Testament facts to be "the entrance of a Divine Person into the human nature."[63]

But we do not come to the marrow of Orr's view of Incarnation till we see what is involved in it for his theological thinking. It involves the fact that God and man are naturally akin, otherwise the incarnation would have been impossible. The old dualism between God and the world is overcome—the divine and the human are not to be regarded as two opposed essences. "A union between God and man is seen to be possible, to the intimacy of which no limits can be set—which, indeed, only reaches its perfection when it becomes personal. The Incarnation has not only this doctrine of man as its presupposition, it is, besides, the highest proof of its truth."[64]

We would here point out that the author adopts a conception as the corollary of his doctrine of incarnation that accords not at all with the presupposition of the Chalcedonian creed. That symbol,

[61] Op. cit., p. 262.
[62] Cf. Jno. 5:22, 27-30.
[63] Op. cit., p. 279.
[64] Chr. V. of God and the World, p. 143.

whose Christology Warfield assures us is only "a very perfect synthesis of the biblical data," rests upon "a philosophical view of God which separates him from the world as a being of totally different nature from man."[65] Surely Warfield, or Orr must be unbiblical concerning the Incarnation.

With this view of the nature of man and his relation to God gained from the doctrine of the Incarnation Orr goes on to consider such questions as the world, its creation and relation to man; sin and the disorder of the world (the connection between sin and death); human immortality; the purpose of God in the creation and redemption of man; the divine permission of sin. Since man is essentially akin to God, being made in the divine image, he is the highest being in nature. The world and all it contains are therefore produced *ex nihilo* and with supreme reference to man. Sin is the perversion by man of his true and normal being as a child of God and the setting up of a false independence. Its effect is a subversion of the true relation of the natural and spiritual, and a frustration of the whole order of nature which through its solidarity with man suffers on account of his sin. Redemption is to counteract all these effects of sin including death. Immortality consists in the everlasting life of man as a compound being of soul and body. Redemption, therefore, is of the whole man, and necessitates the reunion of soul and body at the resurrection. All these positions Orr claims to establish as against Naturalism by reason and Science, and to commend to Christian faith from the Scriptures. In each instance he comes to Scripture with his exegetical result determined beforehand.

Strong's theology, according to his own claim, is described from two foci. The first of these is the doctrine of Christ's revealing and creative agency whereby he is in natural, organic relation with humanity and all Creation, and whereby his historical mission is necessitated, justified and consummated.[66] The second is the doctrine of Divine Perfection in which the Holiness of God is held to be the preëminent, or fundamental attribute, and upon which is grounded the nature and necessity of the Atonement.[67] "The declaration that 'Christ is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of

[65] Vide Warfield, Art. Cit. Am. J. Theol., V. 15.

[66] Systematic Theol., I, 109, 110.

[67] Ibid, 296 ff.

the world' implies the existence of a principle in the divine nature which requires satisfaction, before God can enter upon the work of redemption. That principle can be none other than holiness.''[68] God's holiness, then, binds Him to punish sin, but on the other hand, Christ, by reason of the fact that He created all things including humanity, is in natural union with man and must share in his punishment. In these two doctrines, however, we do not yet have the master key to the whole divine system of doctrine. That is found in the dogma of the Trinity,[69] which he claims is a clearly revealed doctrine of Scripture though inscrutable.

It is very difficult to locate the center of Strong's theological system on account of his apparently diverse statements. In the preface of his Systematic Theology he says, ''That Christ is the one and only revealer of God, in nature, in humanity, in history, in science, in Scripture, is in my judgment, the key to theology.''[70]

But what Christ is it that he has in mind, in this statement? Is it the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels, the Christ who taught the Twelve, the Christ who founded the Kingdom of God? No, he has in mind the Cosmic Christ, the second person of the Trinity. In fact, without the presupposition of the fully developed doctrine of the Trinity, he would never have discovered the doctrine of Christ which he regards as the key to theology. ''The doctrine of the Trinity is taken for granted, as well as the peculiar office of the second person of the Trinity as the revealer of God . . . . . Since Christ is the principle of revelation in God, we may say that God never thought said or did anything except through Christ . . . . . Creation is therefore the work of Christ.''[71] It is evident that Strong in grounding his doctrine of Christ in the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, is not primarily appealing to the Scriptures but is assuming the Scripturalness of that doctrine. The test of his Christology will lie in the strength of the doctrine of the Trinity—whether it is philosophically thinkable, and whether it has a basis in Scripture. He has truly said that the ''doctrine of the Trinity is the key to all other doctrines,'' and if it is not contained in the Scriptures, any interpretation of them in its light will result in a theology which can by no stretch of logic be called biblical.

[68] Ibid, 297, 298.
[69] Ibid, 304.
[70] Ibid, p. vii.
[71] Ethical Monism, p. 1.

What then is Strong's conception of the Trinity? He informs us in six statements. 1. In Scripture there are three who are recognized as God. 2. These three are so described in Scripture that we are compelled to conceive of them as distinct persons. 3. This tri-personality of the divine nature is not merely economic and temporal, but is immanent and eternal. 4. This tri-personality is not tri-theism; for while there are three persons, there is but one essence. 5. The three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are equal. 6. Inscrutable yet not self-contradictory, this doctrine furnishes the key to all other doctrines.[72] The doctrine, so conceived, the author holds, was implicit in the thought of the apostles, and is involved in the New Testament declarations with regard to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, though it was not formulated by the New Testament writers. "The doctrine of the Trinity is not so much heard, as overheard in the Scriptures."[73] We are here concerned to see how Strong overhears. To examine all the texts by which he claims to support this doctrine is, of course, out of the question, but we may note some instances that will indicate his prevailing exegetical attitude.

(a) Old Testament descriptions of God are applied to Jesus by New Testament writers. He is called "Lord" (κύριος) a title that they could not have used as the designation of subordinate and created being. "James, the strongest of the Hebrews, uses the word 'Lord' freely and alternately of God the Father and of Christ the Son. This would not have been possible had not James believed in the community of essence between the Son and the Father."[74] This is, perhaps, Hellenizing the thought of the "strongest of the Hebrews" somewhat unwarrantably.

(b) Christ possesses the attributes of God. "Self-existence: John 5:26"—"have life in himself." But, the author fails to note that the context says the Father "*gave* to the Son to have life in himself."[75]

(c) The works of God are ascribed to Christ, works that are such in nature that they cannot be delegated, but are characteristic of Omnipotence, e. g. the judging of men and the raising of the

[72] Op. cit., p. 304.
[73] Ibid, 305 (Quoted from Gore).
[74] Ibid, p. 309.
[75] Ibid, 309.

dead. In illustration of this statement the author cites John 5:27-29.[76] overlooking the fact that in the context Jesus says that the Father hath "*given* all judgment to the Son," that he gave him "authority to execute judgment because he is a son of man." The same is true concerning the raising of the dead in the same passage. It is included in Jesus' statement, "I can of myself do nothing." The whole passage contemplates a power which *is* delegated. It is characteristic of Jesus whole attitude toward God that he disclaims precisely what this theologian claims for him, power in himself, independent and underived from the Father.

(d) Creation, Heb. 3:3-4. "He that built all things is God"= "Christ, the builder of the house of Israel, is the God who made all things."[77]

(e) The name of Christ is associated with that of God upon a footing of equality, e. g., in the baptismal formula, in the apostolic benedictions etc. The texts cited do, indeed, show that the names of Christ and the Father are associated but the "footing of equality" is apparent in none of them.[78] This curious interpretation of Rev. 22:16 is soberly suggested in support of Jesus' Deity, viz., "the root and the offspring of David"="both the Lord of David and his son."

(f) Equality with God is expressly claimed. John 5:18—"Called God his own Father, making himself equal with God."[79] Strong here, as usual, overlooks the exact circumstances and fails to attend to the context. Jesus does not make the claim to be equal with God, but it is imputed to him by the Jews. In the passage immediately following Jesus seeks to correct the very misapprehension contained in the imputation.

(g) A good example of heroic harmonization is the following. John 14:28—"the Father is greater than I." There is a subjection, as respects order of office and operation, which is yet consistent with equality of essence and oneness with God. 1 Cor. 15:28—"then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all." This must be interpreted consistently with John 17:5—"glorify thou me with

[76] Op. cit., 310.

[77] Ibid, 310.

[78] Ibid, 312.

[79] Ibid, 313.

thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.'' [80]

(h) The oneness of essence in which the three personal subsistences participate renders possible such an intercommunion between them that the work of either may be ascribed to the others, and the manifestation of the one may be recognized in the manifestation of the others. Illustrations: Gen. 1:1—''God created.''; Cf. Heb. 1:2 ''through whom (the Son) he made the worlds.'' Our author here means, that as a matter of fact, it was Christ that created the worlds. God the Father was not the active agency in creation. This intercommunion explains the occasional use of the term ''Father'' for the whole Godhead, e. g., Eph. 4:6—''one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all (in Christ),'' and ''in you all (by the Spirit)''. So the Lamb, in Rev. 5:6, has ''seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth''=''the Holy Spirit, with his manifold powers, is the Spirit of the Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent Christ.'' [81]

(i) The Father is not God as such; for God is not only Father but also Son and Holy Spirit. Each of these titles designates the personal distinction which forms the eternal basis for a particular self-revelation. God's Fatherhood has no meaning except through Christ. Even that natural sonship which men have to God in virtue of the fact that He is the Author and Provider of their natural life as mediated through Christ; See 1 Cor. 8:6—''One Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.'' This text is a little unfortunate for the writer's purpose since it is in the immediate context that the most emphatic affirmation of Godhood as pertaining peculiarly to the Father, is to be found.[82]

(j) How much may be contained in a single text, according to our theologian's system of interpretation is seen in the following. Rom. 11:36—''For of him, and through him and unto him, are all things.'' ''Here is an allusion to the Father as the source, the Son as the medium, and the Spirit as the perfecting and completing agent in God's operations.'' [83]

[80] Ibid, 314.

[81] Ibid, 333.

[82] Syst. Theol., I, 334.

[83] Ibid, 337.

(k) "That the Sonship of Christ is eternal, is intimated in Psalm 2:7. "This day have I begotten thee," is most naturally interpreted as the declaration of an eternal fact in the divine nature."[84]

But we desist from further illustration of President Strong's "be-Scriptured theology." We have seen enough to be sure that he has taken seriously his statement that "seemingly trivial things are to be explained from their connection with the whole."

Reference has already been made to Professor James Denney's alleged inconsistency in his use of Scripture in view of his doctrine of its authority. Garvie, for example, says that Denney "appeals to the language of Scripture as decisive in questions of theology, whether or not that language finds a response and a confirmation in the religious consciousness, or Christian experience." He points out two instances to support his charge. "In dealing with Jesus' words about the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, he dismisses what has been to many serious thinkers a great difficulty thus briefly and boldly, No *a priori* assumptions about the necessity of a purely human consciousness to which such a reminiscence was inconceivable, and no exegetical bewilderments, like those of Wendt, can be pleaded against words so plain." (Studies in Theology, p. 62) "In expounding the doctrine of the Atonement, great stress is laid on the fact that, according to Paul, it was *God* 'Who made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin' (p 112). The very words of Scripture are used, as it were, to coerce human thought and we therefore turn with great expectancy to the Ninth lecture, on the Holy Scripture to see what proof of this absolute authority can be offered. We are not a little surprised to find that it is the much despised and derided subjectivity which is the basis of the authority of the Bible."[85] It is only fair to state, however, in connection with this criticism, that as regards the Atonement, and in the very definite form in which he presents it in his earlier writings, Denney holds it to be itself the very heart of the New Testament message and to be attested by the witness of the Spirit in the hearts of believers. It is precisely here that we find the difference between the Denney of today and the Denney of yesterday. In his earlier writings he identified the gospel with a very

[84] Ibid, 340.

[85] Garvie, The Christian Certainty amid the Modern Perplexity, p. 342 f.

definite interpretation of the significance of the death of Christ in relation to human sin and salvation. For that interpretation he claimed the consentient testimony of all the New Testament writings and sought to make good the claim by exegesis. "The death of Christ is the one subject in relation to which, least of all is it possible to urge the distinction between religion and theology. There is a point at which they meet and are inextricably involved in each other, and that point is the cross of Christ interpreted as the New Testament interprets it."[86] The center of the apostolic theology which is also the apostolic gospel is in Denney's opinion, as maintained in "Studies in Theology" and in "The Death of Christ," the "expiatory significance of the death of Christ."[87] It is this that "as the focus of revelation is also the key to all that precedes . . . . Scripture converges upon the doctrine of the Atonement; it has the unity of a consentient testimony to a love of God which bears the sin of the world. How this is done we do not see clearly till we come to Christ, or till he comes to us; but once we get this insight from Him, we get it for revelation as a whole. To Him bear all the Scriptures witness; and it is as a testimony to Him, the bearer of sin, the Redeemer who gave his life a ransom for us, that we acknowledge them. This is the burden of the Bible, the one fundamental omnipresent truth to which the Holy Spirit bears witness by and with the word in our hearts. This, at bottom, is what we mean when we say that Scripture is inspired."[88] In describing the Atonement accomplished in the death of Christ Denney uses a great variety of phrases such as "bearing sin," "submitting to the death in which God's condemnation of sin is expressed," "Underlying the responsibility and receiving the consequences of sin," Jesus "died our death," etc. He does not say expressly that Christ took upon him the guilt and penalty of our sins, but that he "took on him the consequences of our sins." While there has been much difference of opinion among students as to just what historical theory of Atonement Professor Denney's view most nearly resembles, yet the majority would probably agree that in its earlier presentations it follows Anselmic lines. There is also a tendency among theologians, since the appearance of his later volume, "Atonement and the

[86] The Death of Christ, p. vii.

[87] Studies etc., pp. 222, 223.

[88] Death of Christ, pp. 313, 314. Cf. Studies etc., pp. 107, 109.

Modern Mind,'' to assign him to a different school. Warfield thinks his theory essentially that of Grotius, and says concerning it, ''Substitution is taken in a notably lower sense. At the decisive point men are their own Saviours. This may be very gratifying to the modern mind: it is intolerable to the Christian heart.''[89] The late Professor G. B. Stevens, comparing Denney's utterances in the two earlier volumes with those of ''Atonement and the Modern Mind'' says, ''Had I not read these more recent utterances of Denney, I should have classed him with the uncompromising advocates of the post-Reformation dogma . . . . . In view of this recent discussion, however, I must question his right to a place among the few remaining representatives of the theory of vicarious punishment.''[90] Mead, however, is at a loss how to take Denney's views, and says, ''Upon the whole, the author seems to incline to the Anselmic theory, but shrinks from the logical consequences of it, and attempts to cover them up by the adoption of obscure phraseology.''[91]

As regards Denney's exegesis, however, in his earlier volumes we cannot fail to see that he is quite unduly controlled by the conviction antecedently held that the whole New Testament contains the Atonement theory in the form stated by Paul, or at least that all statements relative to the death of Christ find their most natural interpretation in that theory. Although in his ''Studies'' he emphasizes the theological authority of the mind of Christ as it can be apprehended in the gospels, yet when he comes to the construction of the doctrine that is ''the key to the whole New Testament teaching'' instead of beginning with a careful investigation of the message of Jesus in its total content and proportions, his procedure is as follows. First, he expounds Paul, since he is most explicit, then Peter, and finally as a judicious addenda, he submits a few words upon the bearing of the gospels on the subject. The very order in which a theologian takes up the study of the New Testament materials with reference to a given subject is quite significant for his dogmatic interests. In the ''Death of Christ'' he passes the material in review in the familiar order of modern New Testament Theology, viz., Synoptics, early chapters of Acts, Paul, Hebrews, John. But it seems clear that the order of treatment is to make no difference in

[89] Princeton Theological Review, Oct. 1904.

[90] The Doct. of Salv., p. 197.

[91] Irenic Theol., p. 309.

the result, since the study is to be one of texts, without reference to the large sweep of Jesus revelation in his life, and in his teaching concerning the kingdom. All the passages which can be understood with reference to a specific meaning in the death of Jesus, are, by ingenious exegesis brought into line with the Pauline teaching in which our author showed himself to be satisfied and convinced, in his previous studies. Let us attend, now, to some of his expositions.

(a) "The New Testament everywhere, in all its books and all its authors, connects forgiveness with the death of Christ." From Paul's statement 1 Cor. 15:3 ff. he deduces the conclusion that "there was no gospel known in the primitive church, or in any part, of it, which had not this for its foundation—that God forgives our sins because Christ died for them." Our author here imports into the simple statement, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," the further doctrine that God forgives our sins because Christ died for them in a particular sense, and implies that this was in Paul's mind and the minds of the other apostles in precisely the same form. But an examination of the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic gospels, and a study of the primitive Christian preaching in Acts, indicate that God forgives sin only when men repent and turn to Him. The whole mission of Jesus and not specifically his death is conceived as means by which actual deliverance of men from their sins by repentance and abandonment, was accomplished. Jesus did, indeed, die on behalf of, or for the benefit of the guilty but this death is not described as expiatory in the literature just named.[92]

(b) 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18. are brought into line with Paul with the words, "Our death to sin, our emancipation from it, our new life, depend on this, that at the cross our sins were laid on the sinless One. That any real meaning can be given to these words except the meaning already explained (i. e. in connection with Paul's teaching) I cannot see . . . . . In what way, we ask again, can the death of the righteous be an advantage to the unrighteous, in virtue of its relation to their sins, unless the divine condemnation of those sins, which kept them at a distance from God, fall on the righteous and be exhausted there?"[93] Needless to say, these passages do by no means shut us up to the meaning that the

[92] Cf. Burton and Smith, The Atonement, Ch. vii.

[93] Studies etc., pp. 118, 119.

author indicates. Both passages are holding up the sufferings of Jesus as an example to believers, indicating that it is the principle of Jesus' life realized or illustrated supremely in his death that is of importance, and not some exclusive and special work accomplished in his death. Interpreted in the light of the total context these verses lean decidedly toward the vital, moral theory, rather than toward the penal, substitutionary view. No one, unless he were already obsessed by the expiatory view, would find it here. Our author, indeed, seems to feel the lack of conclusiveness in his interpretation and in connection with it he suggests an interesting hermeneutical principle "A mere exegete is sometimes tempted to read New Testament sentences as if they had no context but that which stands before him in black and white; they had from the very beginning, and have still, another context in the mind of Christian readers, which it is impossible to disregard."[94] Properly qualified, this remark, of course has truth. The principle, however, must not be taken as exalting the context in the minds of Christian readers over the context in black and white, as important in interpretation. It is only when we have exhausted every reasonable means of understanding an author out of the circle of his own expressed ideas in a given document, are we justified in supplementing by an assumed context in the minds of those to whom he wrote. Even in documents that are somewhat apologetic in tone we may easily fail to estimate sufficiently the amount of positive instruction or affirmation that may be contained. It is not good exegesis to appeal from the text of the Scriptures to the manner in which the people might have understood, over the head of the total context of the writer from whom the text is taken. Even though the people were Christian, they were being instructed by a Christian who was further along in the knowledge of the Faith than they were.

(c) Coming to the sayings of Jesus recorded in Mark. 10:45; 14:24., he says that these are at least congruous with the doctrine of Jesus' death which he has been urging. The first, he says, presupposes that the "many lives are forfeit and that His (Christ's) is not; so that the surrender of His means the liberation of theirs."[95] Thus the substitutionary idea is read into the passage. That is, Denney presses the figure of "Ransom," in preference to seeking

[94] Studies, p. 119.

[95] Ibid, p. 122.

the explanation of the saying in the context, since there Jesus death is clearly brought into line with the principle of his life, namely, service, whereas the author is concerned to maintain a special, unique, objective work wrought with a Godward reference in the death of Jesus, which is beyond the purpose of his life. For confirmation of his view Denney refers to another saying of Jesus in which he uses a term of kindred meaning but in a wholly different context, namely the saying Mark 8:34 ff. "It is clear from a passage like this that Jesus was familiar with the idea that the ψυχὴ or life of man, in the higher or lower sense of the term, might be lost, and that when it was lost there could be no compensation for it, as there was no means of buying it back."[96] This looks very much like learned trifling. What the passage really shows with reference to the mind of Jesus is that he was tremendously impressed with the value of the higher ethical and spiritual life, over the things the temporal and material world could offer. It is pure gratuity to imagine that he was in his thought pressing the figure in the way Denney intimates. But our author goes still farther afield to find a circle of ideas that may serve to explain Jesus' meaning in line with the substitutionary theory. Psalm 49:7 ff. illustrates, he thinks, the world of thought in which the mind of Jesus moved. "What no man could do for his brother, namely, give God a ransom for him . . . . . this the Son of Man claims to do for many and to do so by giving his life a ransom for them."[97] Thus, the interpretation of our author would represent Jesus, in a passage pointing to his own life and deeds to illustrate a principle he is seeking to enforce upon his disciples, as having in mind primarily an objective deed of Atonement Godward in which they could not possibly imitate him or have fellowship with him.[98]

Thus Doctor Denney goes through the Synoptic gospels dealing with the various passages in the way that has been indicated, and which misses the mark of true interpretation for the following reasons.

1. His is a process of selection and treatment of texts from a dog-

[96] Death etc., 42.

[97] Ibid, 44.

[98] Cf. Stevens, Doct. Salv, 47-48, 51.

matic motive, rather than the historical study of documents according to principles of scientific interpretation.[99]

2. He passes over the great and outstanding characteristics of Jesus' own conception of his work in relation to sin and righteousness. He tries to explain Jesus out of obscure and doubtful utterances about his death rather than these latter out of his clear teaching concerning his great work in founding the kingdom.

3. He ignores, or overlooks the fact that in contemporary Jewish thought sacrificial ideas had small place. The ritual system, indeed, persisted as a part of statutory religion, but no philosophy of sacrifice was developed. Against this statutory regime Jesus was in revolt, and his sympathies were not directed toward a ritualistic interpretation of religion. This accounts for his slight use of sacrificial language, and it is not to be believed that what he did use was intended to convey any deep theological import. It was employed by way of figure.[100]

In all that has been said regarding Denney's theology and his use of Scripture we have left out of consideration his last important volume, "Jesus and the Gospel." In this book, the present writer considers that Doctor Denney has passed beyond and out of the school of theological thought which is the subject of this investigation. In his two earlier volumes to which so many references have been made, he held that there is a definite doctrine at once constituting a theology and a gospel, which is common to the New Testament writings and which forms the key to biblical interpretation. That doctrine was practically identified with Christian faith, and was held to determine the correct standpoint from which to construct all other doctrines, even that of the person of Christ. He finds much fault with those theologians who make the Incarnation the ruling and ordering concept in theology, intimating that the motives for this are speculative rather than religious, in some cases, dogmatic in other cases. But from whatever reason it is adopted Denney thinks it leads to a minimizing of all that is said in the New Testament

[99] For a truly historical and scientific exegesis of the passages in the Synoptics, bearing on Jesus death, See Scott, The Kingdom and the Messiah, pp. 230-244.

[100] Even conservative theologians have almost all abandoned the task of conceiving the doctrine of Atonement predominantly after any of the partial analogies suggested by Scripture passages. Cf. Mead, Irenic Theology, pp. 304-315. Terry, Biblical Dogmatics, 419 f. Both of these theologians fail to support Denney.

about the death of Christ in relation to sin. "They (the passages) are interpreted emotionally but not logically, as if the men who say the strong things on this subject in the New Testament had said them without thinking or would have been afraid of their own thoughts."[101] In the list of theologians who make the error mentioned Denney names Westcott, and Wilson. It is manifest from our preceding treatment that Doctor Orr and President Strong might perhaps have been included in his list. Among the reasons he urges against such exaltation of the idea of Incarnation over the Atonement are these: (1) It shifts the center of gravity in the New Testament. "The Incarnation may be the thought round which everything gravitates in the Nicene Creed, and in the theology of the ancient Catholic church . . . . . but that only shows how far the first ecclesiastical apprehension of Christianity was from doing justice to New Testament conceptions." "Not Bethlehem, but Calvary, is the focus of revelation, and any construction of Christianity which ignores or denies this distorts Christianity by putting it out of focus."[102] (2) The tendency to put the doctrine of Incarnation into the primary place manifests a concern in metaphysical rather than moral problems, and Scripture has only a secondary interest in metaphysical questions. "The incarnation, when it is not defined by relation to these realities—in other words, when it is not conceived as the means to the Atonement, but as a part of a speculative theory of the world quite independent of man's actual moral necessities—can never attain to a reality as vivid and profound."[103] These criticisms while not equally applicable to all the theologians who make the Incarnation the determinative principle of their theology, are nevertheless valid, from the point of view of Denney, against all since none of them regard the Atonement as the end to which the Incarnation was nothing but means. They all give to the Incarnation cosmic significance.[104]

[101] The Death of Christ, p. 323.

[102] The Death of Christ, p. 324.

[103] Ibid, pp. 325, 326.

[104] Professor Olin Curtis, who regards Professor Denney as "one who beyond any writer of our day, has understood the apostle Paul, and garnered the very life of the New Testament," is even more emphatic in condemning the Incarnation theology. "No Christian man should allow any touch of Hegelian philosophy to place the incarnation in the divine ideal, in the normal life of God; for so to place it gives it cosmic majesty at the expense of its intense redemptional import." The Christian Faith, p. 237.

All this goes to show Denney's strong dogmatic interest in the Atonement doctrine. Now notice the change of emphasis in his later work, and the wholly undogmatic spirit in which he writes. It is quite impossible to identify the man who wrote "The Death of Christ" with the author of such statements as the following. "In all the great types of Christianity represented in the New Testament the relations of God and man are regarded as profoundly affected by sin, and that the sense of a common debt to Christ is the sense of what Christians owe Him in dealing with the situation which sin has created. This may not involve either a formally identical Christology, or a formally identical doctrine of Propitiation, in every part of the New Testament."[105] "We are bound to Him (Christ), in that wonderful significance, that unique and incommunicable power which he has to determine all our relations to God and man. To be true Christians, we are thus bound to Him; but we are not bound to anything else . . . . . We are not bound to any man's or any Church's rendering of what he is or has done. We are not bound to any Christology or *to any doctrine of the work of Christ.*"[106] "The thoughts of the apostles whose minds were first powerfully stimulated by their faith in Christ, will always be a help, and the supreme help, to Christian thought: in some sense they will always be a standard for Christian thinking: but they help us by inspiring in us an intellectual interest in the gospel answering to their own, not by imposing their thought authoritatively upon us as a law to our faith."[107] In such expressions as these the last shred of recognition of an external authority of Scripture, and the last claim for a definite *quantum* of delivered doctrine seem to have disappeared. Even more positive expressions of the relative and changing nature of doctrinal conceptions are found as, for example, "The questions raised by the Christian attitude to Jesus, and the Christian's sense of debt to Him, may have to be asked over and over, taking always a wider range, penetrating always more deeply into the wonder of what he is and does; and with the widening and deepening of the questions, the answers too must vary in form . . . . . They are always subject to revision . . . . . If we look to the Church of the New Testament age, we shall find that this

[105] Jesus and The Gospels, p. 90.

[106] Ibid, p. 337.

[107] Ibid, p. 360. Vide quotation from Warfield p. 9 of this treatise.

is essentially the situation in which it confronts us . . . . . though there is one faith, there is not one Christology,''[108] He might have said also, for it is involved in his position—'though there is one sense of obligation to Jesus Christ, there is not one Soteriology'.

We may conclude this part of the discussion by referring to a theologian who represents a somewhat peculiar and catholic attitude toward all theology and to the use of Scripture therein. According to the late Professor C. M. Mead the Scriptures possess a regulative authority, indeed, but not one that is self-executing. The Christian judgment must arbitrate between different and apparently opposing representations of the various parts of Scripture, and various writers. Interpretation should be harmonistic, not in the sense of the older theology which by the use of the ''analogy of faith'' tended to obscure or ignore the differences, but in the sense of recognizing that apparently opposing views are simply different sides or angles of one truth, or are complementary to each other in the full comprehension of truth. He states as the purpose of his ''Irenic Theology'' the ''illustration of the fact that antithetic and even apparently irreconcilable religious conceptions are often to be regarded, not as mutually exclusive, but rather as needing to be combined in order to express the fullness of the body of truth that is to be found in the oracles of God and in the Christian life.''[109] He expresses doubt of the possibility of Systematic Theology in the sense that Hodge, or Strong maintain. Accordingly, he calls attention to the great historical theological antitheses, paralleling the philosophic ones—shows how these all have their foundation in Scripture representations, and seeks for more adequate statements that shall live together on more friendly terms.

The significance of Mead for the purposes of this inquiry is found in his claim that none of the great theological systems are in themselves biblical since the Bible contains with equal clearness the material contents of them all. But if he is asked why he feels obligated to maintain the antitheses, his answer is two-fold. (a) Revelation, of which the Bible is the authoritative record, is divine, hence a unity and ultimately harmonious. (b) Meantime, ethical and religious needs demand both sides equally.[110] In other words,

[108] Op. cit., p. 348. Cf. also for similar statements pp. 349, 350, 359.

[109] Irenic Theology, p. iii.

[110] Op. cit., p. 136.

theoretical reconcilement is ultimately possible but is indefinitely deferred: moral and religious adjustment are, meantime, experimental fact.

The obvious objection to this attitude toward Scripture is that it does not take into account its literary character as humanly conditioned. He places all Scripture upon the same plane, failing to distinguish between the religious teaching which is the result of positive Christian experience, and those other representations due to apologetic necessities. This distinction is especially evident in relation to the supposed antithesis between Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom in the teaching of Paul.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND FORECAST

A brief summary is here given of the chief results which appear from the foregoing survey. These should be of value in estimating the method of the writers considered, and should afford, both negatively and positively some guidance in determining a more excellent way.

1. In every case some theory of the Unity of Scripture is held in such wise as to exercise a dominant influence upon interpretation. This in itself would not constitute ground for objection if only the theory were derived from an adequate induction of correctly apprehended varieties and distinctions, which the phenomena of the Scriptures actually present. But, plainly this is not the case. The Unity is regarded as in some sense given in advance of any comprehensive induction of particulars, and is used as the *organon* through which the diversity is expropriated from its rights. It has been pointed out how the doctrine of Revelation has influenced the formation of the doctrine of Scripture. If Revelation has been conceived as the supernatural communication of truth to the human mind, it has carried with it the necessary implication of a doctrinal unity and completeness, since the deliverances of the one divine mind must be in accord with one another, and God could not be conceived as stopping short of the communication of all it is needful man should know. If Revelation has been thought of as primarily consisting in a series of divine acts in history, a unity is likewise given, since God could not be deemed to act inconsistently or without plan and purpose. Given the purpose and the plan it is possible to articulate all the individual acts in one coherent and continuous teleology. But, however Revelation is conceived, the Unity of Scripture as the record of Revelation is practically constituted by some specific doctrinal conception which furnishes to theology its architectonic principle, and serves as the key to interpretation. It is this that makes the traditional interpretation of Scripture dogmatic and harmonistic.

In the case of Doctor Hodge and that of Professor Warfield the ruling conception is that of the Sovereignty of God. With President Strong it is the Trinity. Professor Orr finds it in the doctrine of Incarnation. Professors Denney and Curtis found their the-

ology upon the Atonement as wrought in the death of Christ. But the very fact that all these eminent theologians construct the Unity of Scripture from different centers is in itself evidence either that this conception was not determined by a scientific induction of the Scripture phenomena, or that the Scriptures have no such unity as the theory assumes.

2. Inasmuch as the Unity of Scripture is constructed from different doctrinal foci, the systems of theology resulting from interpretation dominated by these different determinative principles exhibit innumerable points of conflict and irreconcilable antagonism. Notwithstanding the conflicts of the centuries, none of these viewpoints are overcome, and there is little progress toward a synthesis of them. The burden of Professor Mead's "Irenic Theology" is the impossibility of any reduction to logical consistency of these opposing systems, and the necessity of maintaining both sides of the various theological antitheses as complements of the full truth whose logical consistency is not, in the present state of our knowledge, to be apprehended. This suggestion, however, is the practical abandonment of the theory of the Unity of Scripture presupposed in their character as the record of a divine Revelation, and has met with little favor. Meantime, however, the obligation rests heavily upon those who maintain the theory to support it. They have been constant in their demand that the critical school of Bible students exhibit agreement in their results, and, given sufficient time, the demand is, within reasonable limits, a just one. But there is even more justice in the demand that the schools representing the older viewpoint shall agree in their results. For, upon the view that the Scriptures are a supernaturally constituted unity, for the express purpose of mediating a supernatural revelation vitally related to human salvation there is created a presumption of clearness and consistency not created in an equal degree by any other presupposition. If the diverse results of the different traditional schools of theology be taken as legitimately derived from the Scriptures, as Mead allows, then the doctrinal unity which, by hypothesis, exists, does not exist and a truly Biblical theology could not possibly have logical consistency and unity as its ideal. This result, moreover, is actually attained and acquiesced in by the greatest masters of Biblical theology in our times. There is no theology of the Old Testament, or of the New Testament. There is no

theology of the Bible as a whole. All the unity that exists either in the two parts or in the whole is a practical religious unity not reducible to logical expression.

3. Another important result springing from the preconception of the doctrinal unity of the Scriptures as the record of a complete revelation, is the constant ignoring, upon the part of those who hold the view, of the larger historical relations under which the religion of Israel, and, later on, Christianity developed. This is especially seen in the all but total neglect of the influence of contemporary Judaism upon the development of thought in the New Testament. The explanation of such an attitude is not difficult. It arises from the assumed close connection that exists between the Old Testament and the New as the exclusive vehicles of revelation, into which if any ideas were allowed to come from the intervening non-biblical history, it would seem like an incursion from an alien realm. In other words, the theory of biblical unity we have been considering, assumes a hiatus between the revelation period covered by the Old Testament literature and that covered by the New. These were "the centuries of silence." But, in thus cutting off the literature and life of the early Christian community from its living connections, the real and vital unity of history is sacrificed for one unreal and abstract.

4. The result, however, which testifies most forcefully to the religious inadequacy of the position under review is the unanimous refusal of these theologians to make the dominant concepts of Jesus controlling in their theological construction. Surely the ideas which Jesus found most serviceable in expressing the heart of the revelation of which he was the mediator, ought to be kept in the central place in all subsequent reflection upon that revelation. Otherwise how is one to test subsequent reflection as Christian? If an inference were drawn from the practice of our group of theologians, as regards this point, it would be that in their view the primary truths of Christian *instruction* cannot be the primary or ruling truths in theological *construction*. It would follow that Jesus was not the first and most authoritative teacher of essential Christian truth. He was not the preacher of a full gospel of salvation. To this position, indeed, some of our theologians seem actually to come. In at least two instances[1] the words of Doctor Dale are quoted (rather inac-

[1] Strong, Syst. Theol., II, 721. Denney, Studies in Theology, p. 120.

curately to be sure) to the effect that "Jesus came not to preach the gospel but that there might be a gospel to preach."[2] And yet Professor Denney has assured us that the "gospels have every quality they need to put us in contact with the gospel."[3] Professor Orr in like vein has written "In Christ's doctrine of the Kingdom of God are embodied *all the great truths* of His revelation. Here most clearly is it seen that the truth he reveals is of a kind that, in the nature of the case, can never become obsolete."[4] Why, in view of such expressions, are these great conceptions of Jesus passed over for others that can be related to Jesus mind only by more or less likely inferences? Evidently because of the traditional dogmatic heritage. By means of Jesus' conceptions of God as Father and the Kingdom of God as the reign of God in the hearts of men, the Greek and Latin theology could not be read into the Scriptures. If primary stress be laid upon these great principles of Jesus, the old theology cannot live in its traditional forms. Professor G. B. Stevens complains that the older theologies in their treatment of the death of Jesus Christ have claimed in it a satisfaction to the ethical nature of God without deriving the conception of God's ethical nature from the teaching of Jesus.[5]

5. Finally, do we not discern by comparing the positions of our several theologians a steady drift in one certain direction, and may we not even now forecast the probable relation Scripture will have toward the theology of the future? In the thought of Doctor Hodge the Scriptures constitute a wholly objective and authoritative standard by which theology is ruled absolutely. Reason and religious experience are carefully excluded from any voice in matters of faith.[6] Yet, even Doctor Hodge has a place of attachment for the subjective test of revelation, since he includes among the reasons for believing in the Bible as a divine revelation the "adaptation of its truths to our souls."[7] A decisive step away from the external authority of the Bible as a whole is seen in President Strong's

[2] Dale, The Atonement, p. 46. "The real truth is that while he came to preach the gospel his chief object in coming was that there might be a gospel to preach."

[3] Supra, p. 17.

[4] Revelation and Inspiration, p. 144 f.

[5] The Doctrine of Salvation, p. 412.

[6] Systematic Theol., I, p. 11.

[7] Supra, p. 23.

change from a doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture to one of their religious sufficiency.[8] A great gulf lies between the meanings of the two words as he employs them. The one suggests the imposition of authority from without; the other the influence of truth from within. Still another step in the same general direction is Professor Orr's denial of the necessity of proving the Bible to be God's word, before he can speak of its gospel. "A book which contains such a gospel needs no external attestation that God speaks through it with authority to men."[9] Here the authority of the Bible is based in its appeal to the soul with moral and spiritual power. Though Professor Orr uses the word infallibility, it is not with the old meaning. He subordinates it strictly to the practical religious interest. The Bible is said to be "an infallible guide in the great matters for which it was given," viz., the knowledge of the will of God for salvation in Christ Jesus, and instruction in the way of holiness. His position is practically the same as that of President Strong.[10]

Finally, in the present positions of Professor Denney we have seen how the formal doctrinal authority of the Scriptures disappears altogether, and how the teaching it contains, even the thought of the apostles does not dominate us but rather helps us "by inspiring intellectual interest in the gospel."[11] "Once the mind has come to know itself, there can be no such thing for it as blank authority. It cannot believe things—the things by which it has to live—simply on the word of Paul or John . . . . . Truth, in short, is the only thing which has authority for the mind, and the only way in which truth finally evinces its authority is by taking possession of the mind for itself."[12]

What, now, is the conclusion toward which all these expressions tend? Is it not that the authority of the Scriptures lie in their value as grasped by religious experience? Inspired Scripture is simply valuable Scripture—a view that seems in remarkable accord with the classic text 2 Timothy 3:16. Every Scripture inspired of God (or God-breathing) is also *profitable* (ὠφέλιμος, useful, ser-

[8] Supra, p. 26.

[9] Rev. and Insp., p. 20.

[10] Ibid, p. 217.

[11] Supra, p. 79.

[12] Atonement and the Modern Mind, pp. 7, 8.

viceable). Scripture is simply the literary reflex of experience. It proves its exceptional value, in so far as it has such, by the manner in which it helps us to interpret our experience and so enriches it for us. It proves its inspiration by inspiring. It exhibits its vitality by generating, or stimulating life outreaching the formal expression of the life from which it arose. The function of the Scriptures, therefore, in the theology of the future will be their effectiveness in stimulating interest in the great religious verities from which they themselves arose, and in thus maintaining that moral and spiritual vitality necessary to the connection of our own experience with those same verities. It is the universal testimony of those who specially cultivate biblical studies according to the ideals of modern Christian scholarship, that the Scriptures are thereby tremendously enhanced in intellectual interest and in their power of religious appeal. So far, therefore, from losing their value and function in theology, they will for the first time really come to exercise their rightful authority. Only, this authority will be vital and functional, rather than formal. In truth, as we have seen, the Scriptures as a whole have not had, nor can they have even a formal authority. That formal authority which has been accorded to the Bible has been a mere semblance. Philosophical, and political concepts derived from extra-biblical sources have been superimposed upon the Bible and have been used to enucleate therefrom those materials in seeming subservience to these concepts. Other materials, far richer in religious content and more vital in Christian experience were either overlooked, or were violently wrested from their natural import to a fictitious agreement with those other theologically normative ideas. Furthermore, it is now evident that Scripture can not have formal authority for theology, because of the large variety of its representations. But Scripture is pervaded by one continuous and increasing ethical and spiritual life which comes to full expression in Jesus Christ and through faith by the Spirit dwells in Christian hearts. In giving to us the Christ, and Life in Him, the Scriptures after all give to us the only norm our theology needs or can have.

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